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THUMRI

Tradition and Trends

Seminar Papers

भरतनिधि, करौंदी
वाराणसी-5

Edited by
R. C. MEHTA

INDIAN MUSICOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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Thumri - Tradition & Trends

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R. C. MEHTA
Editor

Indian Musicological Society
Bombay & Baroda

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Thumri - Tradition & Trends

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Editorial

Selected papers from those presented at the 3 day seminar on "The Traditions and Trends in Thumri Music", from January 16 to 18 1987 have been compiled here. The event was hailed by a veteran music critic Shri Mohan Nadkarni in The Times of India as "Thumri Seminar Incomparable". The entire seminar was spread over nearly 24 hours which included papers and demonstrations, on several aspects of the theme. The demonstrations/ illustrations were a very vital part of the seminar as the readers would find from certain quotations and references in the essays.

As one would readily find from the contents, the seminar covered a wide range of topics, - from antiquity and ethymology of Thumri to the influence of Thumri on music in the Indian films, also covering such aspects as folk elements in Thumri, sociology of Thumri and parallel styles in Karanatic music like Javali and Padam. There were opportunities in the seminar for listening to some very rare recorded music of some old masters of Thumri. A paper on Thumri by Bimal Roy has been included here as well as Pt. Bhatkhande's thoughts on Thumri, also Dilip Kumar Roy's article on the future of Thumri representing views on the subjects a few decades back.

The Thumri amalgamating both the fully verbal and tonal aspects of music has great future and may take different moulds in the voices of master musicians. Several of our conservative master musicians of Dhrupad Dhamar did sing Thumri though Khyal was a taboo with them.

Voice and style both are necessary in Thumri presentation, the absence of which will make Thumri a boring sound. Thumri, though considered "Light" or "Lighter" than the Khyal and Dhrupad-Dhamar, has great capacity for musical expression, exploiting the textual meaning of a very few words or a phrase or a line of a song and acquiring great depth of emotion. Most of the Thumris utilise some two to four line songs expressing deep sorrow or pathos of love and separation; - deepest human emotions on which epics have been written.

Thumri, thus, has acquired much importance in the realm of musical performance for classes as well as for masses. Its re-appraisal was the theme of the seminar which has yield some very note-worthy essays. It is hoped that the readers will welcome this publication.

R. C. MEHTA

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CONTENTS

Editorial

By **R.C. Mehta**

Contributors

1 An Objective Look at the Thumri 1
By **S.V. Gohale**

2 Thumri During the Ages 7
By **Chaitanya Desai**

3 Thumri : Its Origin and Development 17
- With Special Reference to Bengal
By **Bimal Roy**

4 Pandit Bhakthande's Thoughts on Thumri 22
By **Prabhakar Chinchore**

5 Future of Thumri in Classical Music 26
By **Dilipkumar Roy**

6 The Progression of Thumri 35
-Towards Abstraction
By **Prabha Atre**

7 A Critical Appraisal of Thumri 40
By **Mohan Nadkarni**

8 The Hindustani Thumri and Its Parallel 46
in Karnatic Music-Javali
By **S.A.K. Durga**

9 Thumri, Dadra & Padam, Javali 50
- A Comparative Note
By **Sakuntala Narasinhan**

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10 Thumri On Instruments 55
By **Arvind Parikh**

11 The Influence of Thumri on Rabindra Sangeet 59
By **Sitansu Ray**

12 Girija Shankar's Contribution to Thumri 62
By **Alok Chatterjee**

13 On Thumri Taleem 64
By **Anita Sen**

14 Sociology of Thumri 66
By **Vinayak Purohit**

15 Thumri - Accepted Notions and New Trends 71
- with Special References to
- Smt. Shobha Gurtu's style
By **Sarala Bhide**

16 Folk Elements in Thumri 75
By **Sushila Pohankar**

17 Influence of Thumri and Dadra on Film Music 78
By **Pradip Dixit**

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An Objective Look at Thumri

S. V. Gokhale

Convention demands a paper to have a title. My paper is entitled "An objective Look", though we all know that very few topics are amenable to a strictly objective treatment, especially in fields like music. Though my paper is in English, the terminology I use will be totally Indian. I am convinced that trying to translate our traditional terminology into English serves no useful purpose: on the contrary, misunderstandings are likely to arise especially when one has studied Western music. Our tradition can be traced back to the *Natyashastram*, and it is surprising how most of current ideas and practices can be traced to that source provided one takes the ancient text in a broad sense.

How, then, should I look at Thumri as a generic type ?

We have no authentic historical records, and a historical search is a wild-goose chase. I am not much enamoured of tales about the genesis of Thumri.

If I go by the criteria of Baj and Gharana, I expose myself to futile controversy. If I busy myself overmuch with particular details, I do not see the woods for the trees. I shall therefore stick to a modest objective : placing before me the object called Thumri, I shall look at it from various angles and try to note its general, characteristic features. What characterises a Thumri and what does not, is the question I pose.

A Thumri is a class. Classification is always made with a context as referent. In music, there can never be watertight compartments, and therefore the boundaries between different categories cannot be sharp. When I say, this is what characterises a Thumri, I shall remember that all the details of those characteristics need not be present for every Thumri. I shall also remember that certain other generic types of music may also have one or more of those characteristics. A Thumri is a song; it is a verse that is sung. Therefore it has a literary aspect and a musical aspect.

Let me survey the literary aspect first. What general features do I see as belonging to a Thumri proper ?

The Rasas, *Raudra*, *Bibhatsa* and *Bhayanaka*, are certainly absent. There are a few Thumris in which *Vira* appears in the basic sense of energy or vitality. There are a few in which Hasya in the sense of levity is apparent. There are many in which Karuna in the sense of self-pity or compassion exists. But by and large the predominent Rasa of a Thumri seems to be Shrngara. Shrngara is a very broad-based concept, and man-woman attachment in various phases is but a part of Shrngara. However, Indian culture

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had long ago elevated this aspect of human life to a supra-camal plane, and eroticism was not looked upon as an affair of mere flesh. Therefore Shrngara was taken as an important fact and factor of life. No wonder, then, at the predominance of Shrngara in Thumris. By the way, many persons view the man and woman in this context as implying the *Paramatma* (or the *Purusha)* and the Jivatma (or the *Prakrti)* respectively. Prominent among such persons are Vaishnavait Hindus and Sufi Muslims. Thus the man-woman interplay in Thumris is capable of being interpreted in various ways.

This leads us to consider Nayakas and Nayikas. Most Thumris are put in the mouths of Nayikas, though some Thumris are soliloquies of Nayakas. The Nayaka of a Thumri is *not Dus-Shila or Durachara* : he is either Shatha, or Vama, or Vikatthana. That is, he is never a person of evil character or intention; he may however be a dallying philanderer. He does not exhibit firmness, constancy, generosity or profoundness. His attributes relate to personal beauty, elegance, sportive amorousness, sweetness and charm. *(Chatura* and *Pravartaka).* Out of the eight types of Nayikas, only the Swadhina - Patika is not to be found in Thumris. This may be because a *Swadhinapatika Nayika* would result in the *Shanta Rasa,* and the Shanta is not a Rasa which can result from the musical depiction of a Thumri. This point will make itself clear as we go along.

A Thumri is never an impersonal song. Even so, it is generally not a personal third-party affair : the context is always of the 'I-thou, me-thee, mine-thine' type. There may be a passing reference to an event or incident, - for example, the end of the rainy season or the coming of spring, the loss of an ornament, the pitcher of water being broken, the tingle of anklets in the silence of the night, the derisive words of in-laws, and so on -, but the incidents are not narrated in detail. Narration is not the main objective, but rather, depiction of the mental-emotional results of the events or incidents. In spite of the 'I-you' context, a Thumri verse is not cast in dialogue form. There are pairs of Thumris, in which the second is called *Jabab;* however the pair is not necessarily sung in sequence.

Almost all authentic Thumris I have heard and sometimes accompanied during nearly three score years and more, are in North-Indian languages, particularly from the region extending from the Jamuna in the west to the Padma in the east. I have heard a few Thumris in Punjabi and Rajasthani languages, but almost none in Urdu. Of course, there are a large number of Thumris in Kachchhi, Kathiawaadi, Gujarati and Marathi, but these seem to be linguistic adaptations of, or inspired by, Hindi Thumris.

A Thumri verse is not long. The number of stanzas in it is small indeed. Nor is each line long. Harsh words or plosive con-

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sonants are generally, and joint consonants are nearly totally, absent. Vowels predominate, but the proportion of consonants to vowels is very nicely balanced. This enables unduly emphatic stress to be avoided, while restricting the duration of utterance of individual vowels. In colloquial speech and in song, a short syllable can be made shorter or long, and a long one longer still; an act which is called *'Laghuprayatnochchara'* in Sanskrit Grammer (It is called *Laghupaya* in prakrt.). Such Laghupayas are conspicuous far more in North-Indian languages than in West or South-Indian ones. This may be a reason why the Hindi dialects are more amenable to Thumri enunciation. Their flexibility allows one to sing the song with its various shades of meaning, without distorting the words.

In order to depict these various shades, certain extra words are often interpolated in singing, such as *Are, Ari, Han* etc. This feature is not common in other categories like Dhrupad, Tappa or Khyal. I mention these linguistic-literacy peculiarities, because I am nearly convinced that words and their proper enunciation are extremely important in singing a Thumri. The laghupayas and interpolative words enable one to bring out various subtle shades of implied meaning. A Thumri verse if taken at its face-value does not amount to much. But when clearlyy enunciated and intoned with those various and varied alterations, the song brings out almost a never-ending succession of implied meanings.

Barring meters *(chchandas)* wherein the bars and measeurs are long, one cannot specify definite meters as those which belong only to Thumri. This leads me to the conclusion that Thumri is not a specific verse-form. It is definitely a song-form. The Thumriness is contained in the intonation, not in the visual poem.

However, the same can be said more or less about many Chchote Khyals (particularly those in the Talas of Tilwada Jhumra, Jhaptal, Addha in the *Drut Laya)* some Tappas Horis (especially in Dipchandi, Chachar, Punjabi etc.), and Dadras.

Now, Dadra is a Taal, but we say a Dadra is sung. The Vajan of the Taal is taken as the criterion here. Dadra, Nakta, Khemta are Lals in which the bars (Khandas) are of 3 + 3 Matras. Now there is another variety of Dadra which proceeds as 2 + 2 + 2 Matras. But 'Singing a Dadra' is a performance confined to the 3 + 3 variety. And many Thumris are in this Tala. They are sometimes called Thumri-Dadras or Dadra-Thumris. The same applies to songs which are given names of seasons, such as Chaiti, Baisakhi, Savan, Jhula, Fag, Hori etc. Kajri refers to the Kohl and Mascara of the eye: the Nayika of a Kajri is either Vasakasajja or Proshita-Shartrka or Vipralabdha or Abhisarika : and kajri is often regarded as a variety of Thumri. In fact I myself have heard many songs referred to by veterans of a bygone era as Khayali Thumri, Tappa thumri, Chanchal Thumri, Dhamal Thumri, Thumri-Hori. This terminology is not heard now-a-days during the last forty or fifty

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years, but gives a lot of food for thought. It shows us how broad the border is between the class of Thumris and the classes of Khyal, Tappa, Hori, Dhamar etc.

My point will be clear if one remembers that no one uses the terms Dhrupad Thumri or Tarana Thumri or Chaturanga Thumri. I believe this prohibition arises because a Dhrupad, for example, cannot be intoned in a Thumri style. A Dhrupad or Chaturanga, for example, is set in a differnt verse-form altogether. The verse is relatively long, the number of stanzas is more than two, each line is long by itself, the proportion of consonants is quite appreciable, and the subject-matter is in a serious vein. And a Trivat-tarana is meaningless. These chracteristics are opposed to those of a Thumri.

A Thumri is simple, easy to follow. The implied meaning of the words is of greater importance than the plain obvious meaning. Rhetorical ornamentation is absent.

The subject-matter of Ashtapadis, such as those of the Gita Govindam for instance, (which were usually sung at the end of a concert till about sixty years ago, is the same as that of the Thumri. However, an Ashtapadi has sixteen lines and the accoustic effect of alliteration and rhyme is important, which is clearly brought out by the Laya of an Ashtapadi. Hence, I believe, Ashtapadis are not called Thumris.

Having summarised general characteristics of the literary aspect of a Thumri, I shall now try to look at its musical aspect and attempt a description in general terms.

A Thumri singer has to clearly enunciate the text, and at the same time, to convey the import with its various shades of meaning. Therefore, attention is paid to clarity and smoothness of pronunciation. The stressed and unstressed syllables are given different varied emphasis, the duration of syllables are varied, and these actions are accompanied by changing the acuteness or graveness of pitch-accents. This is analogous to the Vibhava and Anubhava of the *Natyashastram*. Its aim is to exhibit the various senses in which a sentence, a phrase or even a word changes its emotive quality. The melodic 'tools' employed for this purpose are the finer graces, like short meend, Ghasit, Murki, Harkat, Kan, Khatka, Fanda, Behelava, Kamp (Trill), Andolan, Pukar and Zamzama. Long Tanas and Bol Tanas are avoided, lest they interfere with meaning. As the succession of long and short pauses is similarly varied, Bol-Bant results automatically, and variations of laya-patterns such as Sawai and Dedhi arise as a by-product. But such Laya variations are not, apparently, deliberate or complex, nor are they a principal feature of the song.

A soft mellow flexible easy voice is far better suited to Thumri singing rather than a deep sonorous or a high-pitched sharp one. Naturally, therefore, the Sarangi is selected as the best accompanying instrument. The deep sonorous majesty of the Bin or

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the metallic stuccato of the Sitar are not capable of conveying the 'Thumri-ness' of a Thumri. However, the Razakhani and more especially the ferozkhani Baz-s of the Sitar have incorporated certain Thumri features. In order to play a Thumri properly on the Sarangi, one has to pay special attention to Bol-nikas, for which a 'Dandka Hath' is more suitable. The sarangi player must have good command on the direction, pressure, speed and forward attack of the bow.

Now-a-days, it is the fashion to have almost a miniature orchestra accompanying a Thumri : I, for one, think that such a practice vitiates the very essence of Thumri singing.

A Thumri singer has to have perfect mastery on Laya, without exhibiting his scholarly virtuosity. Shrngara is the aim. Therefore the serious majestic Pakhwaj is not as suited for the Tal-accompaniment of a Thumri as the Tabla is. In Tabla, the Baya is as important in a Thumri as the Daya. Therefore the Faruquabadi or Purab styles are more suitable than the Delhi or Ajrada.

There are certain Thekas which are called Thumri Thekas or Thumri. Such, for example, are Mula Tala or Multani Theka, which is nearly the same as the orthodox Punjabi, and the Dipchandi Theka. Unfortunately, one does not usually hear these played nowadays as they were till about forty or fifty years ago, but the old way very clearly exhibited the 'gaj' of the Baya and the Tod of half a matra therein. There are Thumris in Chapak, Nakta, Chachar, Khemta, Tappa etc ; but these Thekas too employ like features while accompanying a Thumri. For example, the Tappa Theka for a Thumri is :

Dhin Tatdh inTin Nage; Nage Tatt inTin Nage.

A Dhumali Theka for a Thumri :

Dhin Dhinna ata Ti ntraka Dhin Dhinna ata.

A peculiar swinging lilt results from such a syllabic arrangement within an avartana.

Now compare this with a Char Tal Theka on the Pakhwaj wherein a swing is obvious:

Dha Dhin Naka DhetDhet; Dhinnaka DhetDhin nakadhet Dhinnaka; Dhet Dhinnaka Kitataka Gadigana.

There is Clearly a swing herein too, but it is a rolling, so to say 'majestic' swing like that of the gait of an elephant. It has no lightness of mood. Therefore, I think, it is not regarded as being in keeping with the spirit of a Thumri.

This and similar considerations lead me to think that the word Thumri derives from the verb Thumakna, which is peculiar to North-Indian languages alone. I would not venture into speculations of etymology; still, one can see the connection between the mincing graceful gait called 'Thumakna' and the way a Thumri is sung. Such a gait is described in the Natya-Shashtram under

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two heads called Bhinna and Avakrshta.

The main features of the Mudras, Angahras, Karnas and Charis as given in the Natyshastram for the Bhinna and Avakrshta Gatis as referring to the Nayikas (excepting the Swadhinapatika), seem to be closely related to the Adakari of a Thumri and the main features of Kathak. This however leads us to Abhinaya and Nrtya, of which I am as ignorant as any layman.

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Thumri During the Ages

Chaitanya Desai

Some one hundred years back, Thumri was a composition exclusively sung by dancers and especially by danseuses, and the meaning of it was interpreted by dance movements and by gestures. Thus, it was a dancing tune, probably developed from Dhuns like Dadra and Kajri. The current Hori is much similar to Thumri. Afterwards, Thumri began to be sung independently in music programmes, given generally by female singers belonging to a special class. A few names of thumri singers of renown giving special public programmes in the beginning of the 20th century, come easily to our mind: they are Maujuddinkhan, Pyarasaheb, Goharjan, Malkajan, Jankibai, Vahidanbai, etc. Thumri music is intended to work out mainly erotic sentiment, culminating sometimes in the hands of the best singers into pathos. Its poetry delivers a message of love or pangs of separation. Thumri is always composed and sung in 'small' Ragas like Khamaj, Jhinjhoti, Des, Tilak-Kamod, Peeloo, Bhairavi etc. It uses meend, Khatka and all light graces and is elaborated with Bols. It is timed to slow and simple, but obliquely moving talas. It does not employ rhythmic manoeuvres. The forceful Gamak of Dhrupad and Khyal, has no place in Thumri. Small clusters of Tanas, meend, Murkis, Jamjama and Khatka entangled with Bols are sung, as an extempore elaboration and a few, thin and fast simple Tanas are used as a finish or flourish. As Thumri is music meant to carry an emotional appeal, the singer must have a sweet, soft and extremely malleable voice and also emotional temperament. The singing of Thumri is more difficult than singing of Khayal, because vocal gymnastics and mathematical permutations and combinations could help to go a long way for rendering a Khyal, but these exercises will not help one to proceed even for a short time in singing of Thumri ! Thumri is considered now to be semi-classical music, and so it is not a thing to be taught ! 'Bol' is the soul of Thumri music and one can create beautiful Bols only out of one's own experience and inspiration !

In the past, the Khayal singers considered Thumri singing to be below their dignity, though many of them were not able to sing well like some of the Khayalias of today. But those who could sing Thumri, Dadra, Bhajan etc. well, they sang these before their royal patrons or before their friends at private sittings. Even Dhrupadiyas used to sing Thumri, Dadra, Bhajans and even Ghazals before such private audiences. The late Dhrupad singer, Nasiruddin Khan, used to sing Thumri well and his brother Rahimuddin Khan also sang these songs charmingly. At the beginning

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of the 20th century those Khayal singers, who began to give public concerts had to sing semi-classical songs like Thumri etc. at the end of their Khayal singing mostly as a diversion or sweet antidote to the monotony and boredom created by a long Khayal repertoire !

In this way, the Thumri which was utilized to suggest a theme for dance and is still considered to be light and frivolous, became an independent musical composition, first developed by some renowned thumri singers mainly of Benaras, such as Maujiddin Khan, Vidhyadhari, Shrichand Mishra, Bade Ramdas and later by Siddhesvari, Rasoolanbai, Begam Akhtari, Roshanara Begam, Girjadevi, etc. But in the hands of some great Khayaliyas, Thumri, as well as Dadra and Bhajan singing, became more polished, absorbing some traits of Khayal and as a result emerged as semi-classical music.

The form of composition, i.e. of Dhrupad, Khayal, Thumri, Dadra or Kawali is, if not created, directed and sustained by its particular taal. Naturally, the style of each Khayaliya is reflected in his treatment of Thumri. Gwalior and Agra Khayaliyas generally did not dare handle Thumri, except Faiyazkhan, who sung Thumri, Dadra and Hori not unpleasingly, with his heavy voice and vigorous style ! Bade Gulam Ali Khan used to sing these songs, along with Pahari Geets marvelously and touchingly, dispersed with fast Patli Tanas according to his Punjabi style, which is playful and freakish. Thumri, Dadra, Bhajans and Pads sung by Abdul Kareem Khan were sweet and deep, serene and soulful, having a devotional colour and resulting in pathos. Thumri, Dadra etc. sung by most of the other vocalists have been generally communicative of erotic sentiment.

The common listener dislikes major gamak [Bada gamak] and hates to hear the bombardment of tanas, both being essential parts of Khayal. As the common listeners do not understand the beauty of a Raga and the classical Tala, he is bored by Raga-alapa and Layakari. Also, he wants to listen to and enjoy some poetry in the singing which Khayal rarely supplies in full or in a coherent manner. Khayal singer with sweet voice is also a rarity. Thumri music fulfils all these conditions necessary for satisfying the common man's thirst for music and therefore it is called semi-classical music. Several musicians now find it essential to combine some slight shades of Thumri, now and then, with the presentation of Khayal, so that it may not become dry, mechanical and monotonous, and incapable of holding even the most sophisticated audience for long !

We have noted how Thumri was transformed and developed into a composition to serve music, by the musicians of the modern times. But the Thumri is still used by dancers as a dance song, though they do not call such a dance by the name of Thumri. The Kathak dancers name all such dances, 'lasya' according to the ancient tradition.

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How old is the Thumri tradition ? Without attempting to fight over the origin of the word, it will be interesting to delve into our past and see if this type of song (and dance) ever existed; and whether a textual description satisfies our understanding of the genre.

Muni Bharata has described some varieties of soft i.e. erotic dances of Ballet type. These he has called lasyas, the varieties being named as :- Geyapada, Sthitapathya, Puspagandika etc. Abhinavagupta has stated the basic principles of *lasyas* as follows

" लक्षणं क्रीडा, चित्तसञ्चेत्यः स्त्रियः पुंसि, तस्य वा तस्यां भावः। -- शृङ्गार एव सदभ्युद्रेतो भवेत्। -- एकेन पात्रेण हरणीयं, निर्वाहम्, इति यावत्।"

So, these lasyas were generally solo dances. The song, Catuspadi, which was suggetive of love or complaints about the lover, was sung by the danseuse and the meaning was expressed by dance movements and gestures. The Tala was caccatputa or cacaputa i.e. Trital, Kaharva or Dadra.

As an accompaniment, Pakhvaj, Vinas and Flute etc. were used and Vocal music was provided by female singers, the music being of soft type. These dance-recitals were performed on a stage equipped with curtains and the other accessories. The lasya dance was not pure dance, nor was it a drama, yet some of them were dramatized, i.e. coloured with dramatic elements. These points are elucidated by Abhinavagupta as under:

" स्वशब्दाभिहित-व्यङ्ग्योऽर्थः। प्रधानाभिध-छकोक्तिं-बहुलम् इति यावत्॥ न हि अत्र गान्धर्वमात्रं लक्ष्यम। -- पटेऽपसारिते सति त्रिपृष्करस्य यथास्थानं कृते पूर्वदिशि नर्तकीनां, पार्श्वद्वये च वैणिकानां गायन्तीनां च। -- पञ्चपाणिना चच्चत्पुटेन वा गीयमाने अभिनयनृत्ताभ्यां योजयेत्। -- समुचितार्थां चतुष्पदीं पञ्चपाणिना गायेत्। तस्याश्च नृत्ताभिनयादिप्रयोगः। ननु किं तत्र काव्ये गीयमाने निबध्यते, इति आह :- स्त्रीपुंसयोस्तावद् अत्र संलापो निबध्यते। -- नायिकायास्तन्मदन-विकारवर्णनमप्यत्र काव्यार्थम्। -- तेन करणैरेव मसृणैरेतत् प्रयुञ्जीत। -- तेन नाट्यायिता नाट्यरूपा, न तु सर्वथा नाटयरूपा एव तन्नाट्यायितं वा।" (N. S. Vol. IV, P. P. 271-279)

These lasyas were performed as a prelude to the erotic type of dramas in the Purvaranga. The other variety of drama was heroic, where the dance Tandava was used in the Purvaranga :

" इदं द्विविधं हि नाटयम्। उद्धतं सुकुमारं च।
..... यथा, सुकुमार-पूर्वरङ्गोपयोगिनो लास्याङ्गवर्गस्य, इति।" (P. 275)

Abhinavagupta has based his ideas about Dombika, Bhana etc. on the description given by Chirantana. These descriptions clearly show that the Dombika, Bhana, Prerana etc. were Ballet-type dances and some of them were simply folk-dances. Further discussion of this point is unnecessary here, but Abhinavagupta's explanation confirms that the Dombika dance was a solo ballet, generally performed before a royal personage to please him :

" डोम्बिकासु नरपति-चाटुक-प्राधान्येन प्रवृत्तासु सुकुमारम् एव शुद्धं रूपम्।"

The Dance was of the soft kind but it was Suddha i.e. not dramatized, not having a theme to be portrayed. This and other dances were also performed for public entertainment or before

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deities in temples :

" तत्र प्रथमो भेदो लोकिके स्वतन्त्रनत्त, देवता–तोषणादौ वा । " (N. S. Vol. I. P. 182)

The meaning of the song sung was supposed to be interpreted by the dance with adequate gestures :

" गीतं गीयमान च वाक्यं तस्यार्थम् अभिनयेत् । " (I. P. 180)

" गीतमेव तदाऽन्यार्थं तदन्यगतत्वेन नृत्तादि यथा डोम्बिकादौ । " (I. P. 166)

According to Abhinavagupta's opinion, the song of Dombika was called 'pratikshepa' and this song was wellknown to the people :

" – – प्रयुज्यमानो लोकप्रसिद्ध–प्रथमगीयमानाक्षिप्त डोम्बिकाप्रायः
प्रचुर–स्तुति पदयुक्तो गीति–विशेषः प्रतिक्षेप इत्याह । "

While the other commentators explain 'pratikshepa' to be the free movements of limbs by danseuses.

Abhinavagupta has further described the Dombika dance in detail, in the following words :

" तेन यथा कश्चिरकंचिद् अन्यान्यदेशगानादि–क्रमेण वस्तूद्दोधन–कारण–द्वारेण वा छन्दानुप्रवेशितया वा कथंचिद् मनस्याबर्जनातिशयं विधत्ते, नृत्यन्नपि गायन्नपि, तद्वदेव डोम्बिकादौ द्रष्टव्यम् । तत्र सा नृत्यती डोम्बिका च – – । " e.t.c. (I. P. 175) (I. P. 175)

These explanations by Abhinavagupta give us ample clue for affirming that the ancient Dombika dance was very much similar to the current Thumri dance, performed by the modern danseuses. Abhinavagupta has further cited from the older author Cirantana some couplets to support his conclusions about the form of Dombika and other types of Sanskrit Ballet and opera :

" छन्नानुराग ⊢ गर्भाभिरुक्तिभिर्यंत्र भूयस्तेः
आवर्ज्यते मनः सा तु मसृणा डोम्बिका मता ।" Ect.

Moreover, the lasya "Pracchedaka" described by Bharat (N.S. ch. 31, SI 349-354) seems to be quite similar to Dombika and Thumri dance : " – – – छायां सन्दृश्य कान्तस्य प्रहृष्याथ विभूषितम् ।
नृत्तं प्रसाद–क्रीडार्थं हेलादिभिरलङ्कृतम् " ॥ ३४९ ॥

Later, in the medieval age, the meaning of Dombika seems to have changed, as the term has come to be applied to a fragmentary drama: Thus the Dombika has been classified and described by Bhoja and his follower Sharadatanaya, as Uparupaka (Bhavaprakashan pps 257-258) i.e. some kind of minor dramas, their main components being music and dance, like current folk dramas, based on a small theme taken from the epics or even from the everyday life, like the Tamasha play of Maharastra.

Abhinavagupta has used the word Dombika also in the sense of a female dancer. The word may be suggestive of a cast Dom or Domba. Dombas are considered to be a low-cast people like untouchables. The word appears first in Kathasaritsagar having this meaning. Some scholars interpret the word to mean the caste Dombari of Maharastra, who give a way-side show of country gymnastics and rope-trick, but as these poor people do not perform any dance except perhaps the knife-dance of a meagre kind, it

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will not be fair to drag them in to this Dombika affair ! Sarangadeva has mentioned them as Kolhatikas, which is the right word still used in Marathi to denote the rustic community of these wandering acrobats.

From the description given by Abhinavagupta, we can guess that the ancient Dombika dance was performed by professional or low-caste females like the Devadasis. But it also seems that such a kind of dance was learned and performed before private audiences by girls of the upper class, because the poet Kalidasa assigned Dombika - like dance to be played by his nayika Malavika.

Here we may consider Kalidasa's drama *Malavikagnimitra* and try to understand and appreciate the music and dance presented by Malavika, the heroine, in the second act.

According to the preface of the author to this scene, the song was composed by the epic-famous Sharmistha and was addressed to her lover Yayati. Its fourth part is to be sung and danced by Malavika sharmishthayah kritirlayamadhya chatushpadi; tasyaschaturthavastukam prayogah etc. Some editions read the second sentence as tasyastu chhalikaprayogam :- etc. Here Chhalikam, or more correctly chhalitam, is a kind of dance suited to sringar-rasa abounding in four kinds of gestures. At the beginning of this second act, Ganadasa's introductory sentence also contains the words :- Chhalika prayogam etc. The similar word 'Chhalikya,' occurs in Harivansa, but it seems to mean a song of a particular type

The first sentence of this act, intimating the entry of the hero, indicates that at the time when the king enters the stage the orchestral music is in full swing :- 'tatah pravishati sangeet rachanayam kritayaam' etc. Further, in the sentence containing the direction for the singing of Malavika 'updvahanam krutwa' should be read as 'upohanam krutwa' and 'chatushpaadavastukam' should be corrected as 'chatushpadavastukam' or as 'chatushpadam vastu'. Some editions read this sentence as 'upagaanam krutwa' which should be amended as 'upohanam krutwa'. At the commencement of the first act 'sangeetashala' i.e. the Royal Music Hall and 'chitra shala', the artshowroom are mentioned by the ceti and Bakulavalika. The song sung by Malavika was 'layamadhya' i.e. in Madhyalaya and according to the commentator the composer Sharmishhtha was Yayati's wife. 'Sangeet rachana' suggests the orchestral arrangement in the Music-Hall of the palace.

Abhinavagupta has described the orchestral arrangement for Nritta (or Nritya) performance, as :- 'nrutya bhandavaadhyadi prayogah.....teshamapi' etc. (N.S.I,pp' 193-196) He has explained the word 'bhanda.' as 'bhandavaadyam pushkardvaadyam.'

'Upohanam' is preceded by the song for fixing the sthayi, the tonic or keynote necessary for producing the required mode. In fact 'Upohanam' is a shushakaakshardgeet similar to our nomtom or Alapa of dhrupada, etc. or naadirdirtom etc. of tarana and tillana, when applied to Tala. 'upohanam shushkaaksheram' (N.S.I,

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p. 184, Ag.), its synonym being 'bahirgeetam' indicating that these were sung behind the curtain :- 'etani tu bahirgeetaanyantaryavanikagataihi' (N.S. 5/11). Kalidasa in this drama has used the word 'tirskarineem' for curtain.

The heroine Malavika entering the stage first sings a catushpadi 'dullaho piya me' etc. and then expresses the meaning and emotion of the song by performing a dance with *padarthaabhinaya*. The poet describes the song as 'chatushapadavastu' (gaayati). The Examiner *parivrajika in* praise of this dance remarks :- "yathadarshanam sarwamanavadam kutah?" and describing the qualities of the dance says :- "Malavika has expressed the meaning of the song by her gestures. Her foot-work was in union with the Laya and Tala. The gestures performed by her limbs were of the 'soft' kind, etc." This description shows that Malavika's dance was a *lasya*, containing gestures and foot-work, which were, it seems, important items of that dance. Further, from the hero's remarks 'nruttaadasyaha' etc., we can understand that this dance was of *Nrtta* type.

For deciding the form of dance that was performed by Malavika, it will be better if we examine the text of the song she sang and acted upon. The text of the song is as under :

"दुर्लभः प्रियो मे तस्मिन् बध हृदय निराशम् ।
अहो अपाङ्गको मे प्रस्फुरति किमपि वामकः ॥
एव स चिरदृष्टः, कथमुपनेतव्यो
नाथ मां पराधीनां त्वयि गणय सतृष्णाम् ॥"

This song fully suggests that the songstress here, a young unmarried beautiful girl, is begging the love of the main listener, here being a young royal person. Therefore this song may be considered as a love-message or a courting song, like a serenade, i.e. a Thumri. The King has praised her dance in the following words :

"अङ्गैरन्तर्निहित-वचनैः सूचितः सम्यग् अर्थः
पादन्यासो लयमनुगतस्तन्मयत्वं रसेषु ।
शाखायोनिर्मृदुरभिनयस्तद्विकल्पानुवृत्तो
भावो भावं नुदति विषयाद् राग-बन्धः स एव ॥"

In these lines the King remarks that by her dance, Malavika has fully expressed the meaning and sentiment of the song. From this description, it will not be far from the truth, if I may say, that the song sung by Malavika was a Thumri and the dance she gave was a Thumri dance. Such dance pieces are nowadays also performed by KatNak dancers, by singing a love-song and expressing it by dance movements and gestures or they depict a courting theme from Radha-Krishna love-stories, without a song. Tamasha also containing such dances and the usual Devadasi dances mostly belong to this category. Malavika's song reminds me of a traditional Thumri, 'mori baayin naina farakata' etc.

There are many such Thumris describing the sorrows of separation or longing such as :- 'sudha bisar gai aaj sajan tum kaaheko

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neha lagaaya', etc.

Many more Thumris are suggestive of petty quarrels and complaints of lovers. The lover begging for love in thumri is mostly a woman. We shall have to mark one important point here in connection with the songs in the Sanskrit dramas that almost all the couplets meant to be sung, are composed in Prakrit and not in Sanskrit, the Sanskrit being a rigid, heavy and many times a harsh language with its sandhis and visargas, unfit for bearing the musical fluidity and malleability ! Among the current Indian languages, only the Hindi language possesses these musical qualities.

In Thumri dance the song is sung first by the dancer or danseuse, then the meaning and bhavas are expressed by abhinaya i.e. by gestures. Then, in between, as we see, in such other kind of dance to alleviate the monotony and for bringing a change and also to bring climax, the tempo is quickened, the drumming gets louder and fast, the dancer uses new *angaharas* full of various poses and footwork, ringing the ghungrus to produce drum bolas toexibit the complicatd laya and tala work, amd completes this section by taking fast swings *(cakkardars)* for culmination on the sam of tala. This varied action is observed by Abhinavagupta in short, thus :-

> "क्वचिन् नृत्त-प्राधान्यं, यथा डोम्बिकादिप्रयोगानन्तरं हुडुक्का-वाद्यावसरे। अत एव तत्र लोक-भाषया चिल्लिमार्ग इति प्रसिद्धिः। चारो-मार्गो हि असौ अङ्गप्राधान्यात्। तत्रापि वैचित्र्येण मध्ये मध्ये गीत-वाद्यादेरपि प्राधान्यम्, वाद्यस्यापि क्वचित्, सुषिरावनद्ध-प्राधान्यम् विवेचनीयम।" (p. 167)

So, the song may be again sung in this action which is in fact caari, popularly called cillimarga or callimarga in the time of Abhinavagupta. Such action especially in Thumri music is now-a-days known as calti. In Thumri rendering, the action calti is worked in Tala by playing laggis on the drum or Tabla. While the laggis are played, the singer stops his singing and waits for laggis to finish. This routine is an indication of the fact that the Thumri was used to be sung by danseuses in their dancing and the playing of laggis is suggestive of callimarg, i.e., free and fast dancing at the climax stage.

At the end of the dance the lines of songs were sung by altering the tempo according to the dancer's will and therefore this action was named 'Chhandaka' Such use of the words of a song is called 'bol-tan' in modern music. This action, Chandaka in Dombika dance, was to be worked out by change of tempo and footwork at will :-

> "..... गीतक-गत-वस्त्वङ्गादि यत्र स्वेच्छया समाश्रित्य एक-द्वि-त्र्यादि-नियमेन प्रयुज्यते, तानि छन्दकानि। यानि अद्यत्वे नृत्त-तालात्मना डोम्बिका-नर्तकी-लय-चरणादिरूपेण प्रसिद्धानि।" (I, pp. 192-193)

From Abhinavguptacharya's explanation, it seems that the common drum Dholaka was used as the percussion accompaniment.

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Probably in the middle ages the bass-tenor pair of drums called Nakkara of Caughada named as Tavil in the South and which is specially used by Shahanayi layers and in Navatanki dramas of Uttar-Pradesh, took the place of Hudukka. Later Tabla, a revised form of caughada, whih is to be played by hands, and which has the combined sound qualities of both the Pakhwaj and Dholaka, was introduced to accompany the thumri dance and singing such light strains.

In ancient time Veena and Flute were used as music accompaniment for 'high-brow' and 'low-brow' kind of singing and dance, but soon, I guess, the sophisticated bowed instrument i.e. Sarangi took the place of the veteran instruments, as it had a continued tonal breath. Its primeval specimens like Ravanahatta are still in use in tribal music. Abhinavagupta has mentioned Sarangi, I guess, by the name Sarika along with Ravanahasta:-

"..... अन्यत् सरिका–रावणहस्तादि "..... (IV, p. 100)

Sarangadeva has included Sarangi in Bharata's orchestra :

" सारङ्ग्यालपनीत्यादेस्तत वाद्यस्यवाद्यका: " ३।११५॥

Initially Sarangi was used as an accompaniment to light songs like Caiti, Kajri etc. The Thumri is supposed to have evolved out of Kajri - like songs. Sarangi, with its mellow and feminine 'voice' was preferred more to accompany Kajri and Thumri than to the manly Dhrupad. The Khayal singing is born out of the blending of Dhrupad and Thumri. As the Pakhwaj was found to be too loud and stiff for Khayal singing, Tabla and Sarangi were accepted as their main accompaniment by the Khayal singers. Some of the best Khayal singers were initially Sarangi players or were trained by some renowned sarangi players. Thumri singers were and are generally trained by sarangi players.

So far we have seen that the Thumri composition and dance were prevalent in the ancient era in one or the other form. This means that Thumri has a long tradition, though we do not find any clear reference of its description in the later works on music. But in *Sangitdamodar*, belonging to the 15th century, we find it, named as Jhumari. It has been described by the author Subhankara in the following words :-

प्राय: शृङ्गार–बहुला माध्योक–मधुरा मृदु: (?) ।
एकैव झुमरिर्लोके वर्णादि–नियमोज्झिता ॥
अतो लक्षणमेतस्या नोदाहारि विशेषत: ।
इदं हि मालगं मूढ प्रसिद्धं नृप–रञ्जनम् ।
अवलेपाम्बुधौ मग्नमुद्धधार शुभङ्कर: ॥ (सं. दा., पृ. २८)

From the above description drawn by the author, we can say for sure, that this is our Thumri ! The author rightly boasts that he has rescued it from the abyss ('Sea') of disrepute ! This must be the reason why our high-brow authors of old have shirked mentioning even its name, along with their numerous Prabhandas.

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After the above cited slokas of the meagre description of Thumri, the author has warned his scribe about the mistakes in writing that may be committed by him ! By taking his warning seriously and then applying it to his word 'Jhumari', we shall prefer to read the word correctly as Thumri : Author's warning runs as follows :

सावधानैरिदं लेख्यं लिपि-दोषो यमः स्वयम् ।
कुज्झटिनेत्रका चाभा तिमिरं यमनो पटः ॥

A female folk-dance in Punjab is called Jhumri, but it is not our Thumri dance.

I have mentioned in the earlier paras that the elaboration of Thumri composition is done by *bol-alap*. The *alap-notes* are sung with the grace *meend* or slow swing *(Aandolana)*, which is called *Bahalava*, taking along with and in between, the graces *Khatkas*, *Murkis* and short plain *Tanas*. Khayal music has borrowed all these graces of thumri and the technique of its alap from Thumri, mixed with some technique of Dhrupad *alap* and its grace, the forceful *gamak*, for maintaining its form, which is as a rule, grave and vigorous. Naturally, therefore, there are mainly two different styles of Khayal singing i.e. one, more vigorous and stiff leaning towards Dhrupad and the other soft and decorated, leaning towards Thumri. Between these two there are other graded varieties, all sprung out of and depending upon the kind of voice and temperament of the artist which then took the form of *Ghar anas*.

Khayal has astonishingly great capacity for absorbing and assimilating any artistic shades, - even 'drama-music' and 'regional music'. Two great Khayal singers of recent past have tried this to bring novelty in their art, with much success. The 'robust' variety of Khayal-singing, when overdone, culminates into shouting and harsh bellowing. On the other hand, some prospering young Khayalias, nowadays sing the Khayal with soft graces like *Murki*, *Jamjama* and short 'thin' *tanas* in place of *Gamak* and *Bahalava*, making it as light as Ghazal-Kawwali to invite applause from the lay audience, whose taste for music is bred and fed upon the all-pervading film music ! Balance and artistic judgement found in all great art is thus sacrificed.

Thumri singing has also two main styles : one is purbi, gentle and straight and the other is Punjabi, freakish and coquettish. The third variety, named Delhi, is now absorbed in the Chhota Khayal. The aim of the art of Dhrupad and Khayal music is to develop Raga and Tala in every aspect, along with the mood of the Raga, while the aim of Thumri and all other geet music is to paint a sentiment.

A real artist is one, who makes the old form look new, adding some new shades to it or readjusting the old elements in a new pattern, without harming the basic structure. By prolonged famil-

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iarity, so called beauty loses its charm, the time-worn traditional form becoming stale and meaningless. Beauty is the other name for novelty and wonder which are the products of a creative and aesthetic mind.

Broadly, we find two kinds of musicians; Those who are traditional ustads and others, who are 'popular' artists. Only the popular artist rejuvenates the old form of any art by infusing fresh blood into its veins from time to time and makes it look young and beautiful, according to the tendencies of the new age. Accordingly, as I see it, the modern form of Thumri is more refined and lovely than that of even Maujuddin and Goharjan. Our devotion for the past should not make us blind or reluctant to see and accept the facts and demands of the present; it may be that the nature of our classical music does not leave much scope for any drastic change. Still, we humans always crave change and novelty, some times called progress ! Our art has grown out of this activity of searching new ways of expression, remoulding the older form into a new creation.

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Thumri - its Origin and Development, with Special Reference to Bengal.

Bimal Roy

ORIGIN

Thumri, as we all know, is a Melody - type of lighter variety. Various opinions have been and are being advanced regarding its origin. Unfortunately, these opinions are based on hypotheses rather than on facts. The scholars, had they persevered, could have easily got hold of the treatises of the middle ages and ascertained the facts about Thumri. The treatises are *Bharat Sangeet, Raag Darpan* and *Tuhfaatul Hind*. Bharat Sangeet, unavailable at present but procurable even during the reign of Aurangzeb, was the work of one Bharat of the Mohamedan period who propagated the Bharat Mat of Raaga classification. Baiju as well as Taansen referred to this Mat in their compositions; such as

1) Ansa grahanyaas vikruta dwaadas bhada so
Bharat Sangeet Hanumat jataabai
Kahe Baiju Baawara suno ho Gopaal Naayak
aisee vidyaa so ko ladai paahan pighalaavai

2) Brahmaa veda ucharaya saaranga banraaya
Bharat Mat Kallinaath-Hanumata Mat Saptaadhyaaya gaayau
Taansen taak Baiju paakhaan pighlaayau

According to this Bharat Sangeet, the Raaga Shree had five Raaginees of which Thumri was one. Thus we find Thumri as a Raaginee, in 15th Century A.D. Mirzaa Khaan, the author of Tuhfaatul Hind (1673-74) was the first man to mention Bharat Mat in detail. It was he who brought to light the six Raagas and thirty Raaginees of Bharat Mat and described Thumri - the Raaginee of Shreeraag - as one very popular in the Doaab region, between Gangaa and Yamunaa rivers (Allahabad & surrounding region). Now, popularity indicates that the *Raaginee* was quite often applied in lyrical pieces as the tune. Mirzaa Khaan did not forget to mention the tune produced by Thumri; according to him Thumri developed out of the combination of Shankaraabharan and Maaru Raagas.

This Thumri, which stood for a *raaginee*, a tune, as also a musical piece set to Thumri tune, was also mentioned by Faquirullaa, the author of *Raag Darpan* (1666 A.D.). According to Faquirullaa, Baruaa, a melody-type and a tune was know otherwise as Thumri. It is interesting to observe that even in the 19th Cetury A.D. musical compositions of Thumri type were found making

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abundant use of Baruaa, Pilu-Baruaa and Pilu tunes. Thus we may conclude that Thumri, as a Melody-type and as a tune or raaginee was being sung in and around Allahabad, even before the reign of Shaahjahaan. It is evident from the above-said description that Thumri was a local form, similar to Dappa, or Chanda of Punjab, Lachaaree, Banglaa of Eastern India etc. But we are in the dark about its composition,. its style and method of presentation and progression. We may however, guess something about Thumri's nature from its definition and later-day characteristics. According to the dictionary Thumri means a kind of verse, a poetic metre. Thumris of the 18th Century and early part of 19th Century A.D. betray rural traits of language, of poetic compositions of some length and of progression of one portion of a composition from slow tempo to faster tempo before beginning the next portion of the composition.

Thus Thumri was a melody-type having;

1) two or more musical stanzas of tuks,
2) Poetic composition of some length,
3) Local dialect showing rural tinge
4) light tunes of the nature of Baruaa, Kaafi etc.,
5) Simple or light Taalas,
6) Progression from Baraabar Laya at the onset of a stanza ending in Drut Laya to begin next stanza in baraabar laya.
7) Love as its subject-matter
8) Origin in Allahabad and surrounding areas.

DEVELOPMENT

Thumri developed later in the hands of Waazid Ali Shah of Oudh and Saadiq Ali of Gwalior and evolved into Kahay Thumri and Lachao Thumri. At present, we find Thumri classified into Poorbi, Pachhaawaa, Panjaabi, Kahan and Lachaao types. But disussion about these is beyond our scope.

It is time we take up our special subject - Thumri in Bengal :

That thumri was in vogue before the time of Waazid Ali Shah of OudV is evident from the mention of the names Dhaman and Lajzat Bakhsh in the book Maadnul Mousiqee (1857) by Muhammad Karam Imam, as fine performers of Thumri. This Thumri made its way eastwards and reached Bengal in the first quarter of the 19th Century. At that early period of British rule the elites of Calcutta, Murshidabad, Dacca and other towns vied with one another, if only to show off, in inviting first grade musicians from outside Bengal to their courts. Amongst the invitees were Baais and Nautch girls of Lucknow and Banaras who introduced Thumri of the Ghanaakshari and the Khadi types. But though eulo-

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gized by a small section of the musical society, Thumri was then held as a hybrid form of music to be abhorred by classicists. Krishnadhan Banerjee, the author of Gitasutrasaar, was the only exception amongst noted musicians to hold Thumri in high esteem as a fine piece of aesthetical music.

It was however left for Waazid Ali Shaah of Oudh to hold up Thumri in its proper perspective. He came to Calcutta in 1858 with his train of musicians and initiated local talents into the beauty and subtlety of Thumri-singing. At that time many Bengali musicians used to lurk round the court arena to feed them with Thumri tunes and make use of those tunes in Bengali songs. Some of the original songs were also found being sung by local musicians and later incorporated in their books of notation along with older songs. These were then recognized as simple types of Tappaas composed in Hindee and impure Braja bhaashaa and sung in Thumri taal and similar simple taals.

Examples in short :

1) Chhaand de moree banhiaa bhaalaa sainyaa"
2) Nipata nithura natabara bar dagara dagar ghere
3) Ehaa dhun murali madhura kanhi baaji re
4) Kaa karu sajani piyaa bina
5) Jab chhor chala Lucknow nagaree
6) Baiyaa na pakado moree naajuk kalaai re
7) Neera bharana kaise jaau

But even then the popularity of Thumri was only surface-deep; because at that period the music-minded public had no chance of contact with Shaah's Durbaar. Moreover, musicians were still reluctant to give Thumri pride of place and held it as an extra piece of cheap candy after heavy food with Dhrupad and Khyaal. This attitude towards Thumri desisted them from serious attempt to expose the bland form in all its detailed splendeur.

It was left in abeyance till the arrival of Ganapat Rao Bhaiyaa in Calcutta. Shyamlal Kshetri of revered memory was instrumental in bringing Bhaiyaa Saahab down and introducing him to the music-loving public. Bhaiyaa Saahab, the son of illustrious Chandrabhaagaa of Gwalior Court, brought with him the Lachaao variety of Thumri in which he was initiated by the well-known Khayaaliyaa Saadiq Ali Khaan, who used to visit Lucknow court and was therefore conversant with Kahan and ordinary varieties of Thumri sung in Waazid Ali Shaah's Durbaar. Shyamlal Kshetri learnt all these varieties from Bhaiyaa Saahab and it was he from whom Girija Shankar Chakravarty a disciple of Radhikaa Prosaad Goswaami, mastered all the intricacies and excellences of Thumri singing. Girija Shankar Chakravarty is realy the father of modern Thumri singing in Bengal. It may be mentioned here that Amiyanath Sanyal

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was also a disciple of Shyamlal Kshetri but he did not do much for the propagation of Thumri in Bengal. Of course, we should not forget his daughter, Rebaa Muhuri. Apart from these two we find direct disciples of Bhaiyaa Saahab doing their bit to popularize Thumri, - they were Gauharjaan, Noorjahaan and Pyaara-asaahab.

But Calcutta was not the only seat. We found other towns where Thumri was being practised. This was made possible because of the dislocation of Durbaari Ustaads and their settlement in the courts of rich people of Bengal, as also exodus of willing Bengali artists to seats of music like Delhi, Gwalior, Benaras and Lucknow to learn Hindusthanee music. This in-coming and out-going started after the downfall of the Moghal Empire under Shaah Aalam II. Whatever that be, Calcutta remained the main seat of Thumri culture because of the influence of Waazid Ali Shaah, Bhaiya Saahab and Mauzuddin and lastly Girija Shankar Chakraborty, who produced an array of brilliant students like Taaraapada Chakraverty, Gnanprakash Ghosh, Sunil Bose, Jaamini Ganguli, Sukhendu Goswami etc. In the wake of Girija Shankar appeared Jamiruddin Khaan and Nagendra Dutta - who had his Thumri training in Patnaa. Both of them built up a retinue of excellent Thumris ingers, such as Krishna Ch.Dey, Kaazi Nazrul Islam, Satyendra Nath Ghosh, Bhishmadev Chatterjee, Sachin Das Motilal, Bibhuti Bhusan Dutta etc. etc. Then we found Nawa-adjaan, Mehdi Hussain and Khaadim Hussain Khaan coming all the way from Rampur Durbaar to settle in Calcutta and impart their knowledge of Ghanaakshari, Panchhaawaa and Lachaao Thumri to their students, - some of whom are Satendra Nath Ghosh, Ratneshwar Mukherjee, Anil Baagchi, Bimalla Prosaad Chatterjee.

From time to time some others have also come and enriched Bengal with their Thumri styles which have been followed by enthusiastic musicians. We may name Abdul Karim Khaan, Faiyaz Khaan and Bade Gulaam Ali. Thus Bengal has come to possess all the styles in which Thumri was and is being sung.

The Lachaoo style is however adjudged the best of all and is sung zealously by most of the singers - mainly of the Girija Shankar school. But there is no dearth of talents who can most correctly render other styles also with equal ease and poise. Of course, nowadays a section of Calcutta's singers is after combining Abdul Karim's or Bade Gulaam Ali's style with Lachao. It may be noted that Thumri was formerly sung after Khyal or even Dhrupad. It was Waazid Ali Shaah who started producing pure Thumri features - but those were performed strictly in his Durbaar. Bhaiyaa Saahib was the first man who gave public demonstration of Thumri, as the main and the only item. This practice is however out of fashion in general, although we find Thumri being sung singly in radio programmes and occasionally in private Jalsaas. In this connection we should not forget to mention the

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name of Rabhi Guha Majumdar who may sing Thumri as the only item in its various types which he learnt from Akhtari Baai and Muneswar Dayaal. The well-known Khyaal singer Anaath Naath Bose - father of Shyamal Bose (Tabla) - was also a noted Thumri singer, who could sing Thumris in a row, in a female voice. He had his training in Banaras.

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PI. Bhatkhande's Thoughts On Thumri

Prabhakar Chinchore

With a desire to acquire first hand knowledge on the material and data so far and collected, Pt. Bhatkhande, between 1897 1908, decided to visit important seats of music in all the four corners of the country. He used to record all the important events in connection with his search for music in the form of dairies. Copies of three such travel reports are available with me and are also preserved in the Indira Kala Sangit Vishwavidyalaya, Khairgarh. This article is based mainly on Pt. Bhatkhande's diaries.

Reaching Madras on 15th November 1904 he writes, he would not waste time in visiting Courts and Darbars of the Rajas having nothing to do with the progress of music nor would he waste time and money in meeting professional female artists who, as per his experience, would not help in the systematization of music, his primary aim of life. However, on 18th November he attended a concert of the renownd female singer Smt. Nagraj and wrote a long note on her execution of certain Ragas. Also on 23rd November he agreed to visit the residence of Veena Ddhanam another illustrious female musician of the South.

In December 1907 at Calcutta he tried his best to hold serious and fruitful discussions on Thumri with exponents of the styles of singing such as Babu Dulichand, Shyamlal, Bhaiyasaheb Shinde, Preetam Lal, Kaukubha Khan etc. who insisted on his listening to Thumri - gazal singers such as Goharjan and others which he refused with remarks that he had sufficiently heard Thumri in Bombay and was not interested in wasting time with persons who in clear words accept no knowledge of relevant literature on the subject.

On 12th December 1908, when in Lucknow for the first time, he spent a week exclusively with Bindadin and Kalka Prasad, the two illustrious brothers who by their performances impressed him very much. Pt. Bhatkhande insisted on Bindadin to show him the much talked of manuscript on the authority of which people believed that their present dances had a direct link with that of the days of Lord Mahadevai with great effort and patience he could get access to those loose papers describing a talk between one Mahadeva and Tomar who was wrongly misinterpreted as the great Tumburu. The manuscript contained no sign of information on dancing, acting, Tal or Swara. Bindadin told him that his father could copy out only that much portion from a book called *'Sangit Darpana'* handed over to the sage by. God Mahadeva himself. Pt. Bhatkhande had carried with him copies of *Sangit Darpana* of Damodhara and also that of Harivallabha. Bindadin

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further told him that for the execution of the delicacies of Abhinaya the Thumries gazals and other songs that he sang were all handed over to him by his father Thakur Prasad. Thus the 'Parikhana - music' expounded by Wajid Ali Shah and his Guru Thakur Prasad failed to impress upon him its use in the process of the systematization of present music or its remote foundation.

In 1918 under his guidance a regular College of Music with graded courses of study was established in Gwalior. Prior to this Pt. Bhatkhande picked a batch of seven musicians of the city and took them to Bombay for intensive training in the methods of mass education in music. It included one Shri Chunilal Kathak who was later on entrusted with the responsibility of running a separate branch of the main College where young girls of the professional class of singers would be taught serious music of Thumri - Dadra. During his frequent visits Pt. Bhatkhande inspected this 'Tawayaf School' a branch of the main central school and submitted reports on its work to the Education Department from time to time. In one such report he expresses deep concern over the output and the expenditure over this item of uplift of the music of professional female singers. By professional female singers he necessarily meant music of Thumri - Dadra and gazals. A chapter on this written by Pt. Bhatkhande is being reproduced in the appendix of this article which indicates his genuine love for the overall upliftment of the Thumri - Dadra type of music.

In 1928 Rai Umanath Bali proposed to have the sixth session of the All India Music Conference again in Lucknow providing due importance to the Thumri - Dadra music. Pt. Bhatkhande's remarks on this in a reply to Rai Umanath Bali is reproduced in the appendix (dropping the last para of the letter, which conceehs his health) which speaks for itself and also justify his actions in the country wide efforts of the uplift of music in this sub-continent.

In 1940 Prof. Bade Agha of Lucknow published a book with notations of nearly sixty traditional songs of the Tumri style. In his 'Guldaste Nagmat', Prof. Bade Agha paid rich tributes to Pt. Bhatkhande for encouragement in his pursuit. In the introduction of this book Bade Agha explains how Pt. Bhatkhande ardently loved music of Thumri, Dadra, Holi Chaiti, Kajari and Gazal in its traditional attractive form and how he learnt these songs from his gurus namely Pt. Bhatkhande, Raja Nabab Ali and Mohamad Ali of Gidhor. For Pt. Bhatkhande it was a matter of preference to priority that he concentrated more on serious music of Dhrupad and Khyal the extinctio of which otherwise was evident.

Appendix

MALBAR HILL
BOMBAY
28th July 1928

My dear Rai Saheb,

I have duly received your letter dated the 25th, which reached

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me today. I can very well understand your anxiety about the financial condition of our Music College. I quite agree with you that we must do our utmost to improve that condition without further delay. Yes, the idea of having another conference in the way you suggest appeals to me and if great men like the Maharaja of Mahamoodabad also suggest it the thing may be worth trying. I agree with you that there is no good in inviting a lot of worthless malingerers to the conference and place before the public a useless Tamasha involving us in heavy expense and worry. I approve the suggestions you have made in the letter, particularly the last"one, namely having a competition of professional female artists. That suggestion always came before the Managing Committee of the previous Conferences, but had to be tabooed for fear that the conference would thereby lose the confidence of the general public and lead to misunderstandings among its main supporters and sympathisers. We are fairly advanced now and people will not misjudge our motives. In an advanced province like Oudh (U.P.) at least, we hope people will not dislike the idea. In the circular letter we may plainly say that there are three Arts *(Geet, Vadya, Nritya)* comprised in the Indian term Music (Sangeet). In the previous conferences we succesfully brought to the notice of the public the first two Arts and at the next conference we propose to add the last, that is the art of Dancing (abhinaya) with a view to see how far the art of Dancing-particularly abhinaya which requires help for its uplift. That will bring in female artists with their vocal music and dancing to the conference. It is no secret that people like female singing much better than the howlings of the so-called male experts. Then again we know that there are very few real male artists left in the country and the art of vocal music is fast dying away. When I was in Lucknow last year I actually mentioned to some of my friends my idea of sooner or later opening a branch of the Marris College in the city for the benefit of the young girls of the professional female singers, under the direction and guidance of the college authorities. The idea, it appears, reached the ears of Achhan Bai and Bicheva the local first class artists and was told they liked it very much. The two *choudharanis* are willing to come to see me at the college to talk the matter over with me, but I thought their appearance at the College was against the policy and rules of the College and did not consent to see them. The branch institution was to teach courses suited to the needs of girls attending it, of course Munnay Khan and Ahmad Khan also approved the idea. I mention this to you simply to show you that I am personally not against the idea of inviting female artists to take part in the conference by exhibiting their skill. I was only afraid we might thereby frighten away some of our extra-puritan sympathisers. But if in the interest of the College the step becomes necessary, I would be the first to support it. However before proceeding to take any

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final decision or step you must be sure of your friends particularly Raja Nawab Ali and Maharaja of Mahamoodabad. If they are at your back to support you, do take up the matter. We should appoint a small Sub-Committee of the local famous artists (female) and issue invitations in their names to such of their female artist friends as in their opinion would be worth inviting. They know their people better and we may leave that to their judgement of course using our own discretion at the same time. So far as I know the best female artists will be found in U.P., Punjab, Bengal, Gwalior, Indore, Baroda and Jaipur. There is nothing worth looking for on this side. Gazal and Thumari singing is only to be found in Upper India. We should also have our own committee to manage the whole show. The demonstrations should be held in a big theatre, that will save a lot of bother and worry. The theatre may be found insufficient for our needs, but we should make the conference long enough so as to give every artist a chance. Side by side we should invite some of the most famous male artists to give the public and the female artists a chance of hearing first class select-music. Scholars intending to read papers on and dancing or on any of the out of the way Ragas may be invited. The details can be worked out if the idea is taken up. Do consult your friends there and let us have the next conference in January or March. I am glad the Maharaja of Mahamoodabad is so sympathetic. He is a great man in Lucknow and I have no doubt his sympathies will make the proposed conference a success.

In the course of the conference one of the local first-class female artists should propose that a branch of the Marris College be opened in a convenient quarter in the city where the little children and young girls of professional female artists should be taught their art by wellknown female artists and one or two old male experts. Achhen Bai and Bicheva, I am sure, would offer their services free because God has made them rich and sufficiently independent. I am sure, they can be persuaded to throw their hearts in this great work which will bring them the thanks and blessings of hundreds of singing girls. The pupils trained by them as well as trained at the College may give public demonstrations every three months to select audiences (who will have to pay for admission) and thus there will be contributions coming in for the college fund.

As to having competitions for the amateur ladies and gentlemen I am not sure, if that idea will appeal to them. They will be afraid to sing before such big audiences and particularly before the professionals. In that case we shall have to provide for them separate place and audiences, ladies may not sing before males and so, a separate arrangement will be necessary. But these are all details, which can be satisfactorily managed.

Yours sincerely,
V.N. Bhatkhande

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Future of Thumri in Classical Music

Dilip Kumar Roy

Editor's Note : This paper was read at the 4th session of the All India Music Conference held at Lucknow in January 1925. It has been sent by Prof. P.N. Chinchore, with a view to relating it to Pt. Bhatkhande's thoughts on Thumri, as well as to contemporary approach to this style of music.

In his forwarding note, Prof. Chinchore has reproduced the following from the Proceedings of the Fourth All India Conference of 1925 :

Son of a famous novelist of Bengal, Shri Dilip Kumar Roy was himself a reputed Thumri singer in the early thirties of the present century. Pt. D.K. Joshi in his 'Kkalavantacha Itihas', describes him as a foremost living authority on Thumri specially among educated class of musicians of the time. In the fourth All India Music Conference at Lucknow in 1924, Pt. Bhatkhande desired to invite a full discussion on Thumri an important but so far neglected branch of knowledge of Northern Music. Shri Dilipkumar Roy was intentionally picked up for this where he read the present article before a select audience comprising foremost musicians and active lovers of the subject. Among other writers of papers on various topics included Pt. Bhatkhande himself and his other disciples and friends such as Shri S.N.Karnad, Dr. S.N.Ratnjankar, Rai Umanath Bali, D.K.Joshi and M.S.Ramaswami Iyer. There is every reason to believe that the views expressed in this article were endorsed by Pt. Bhatkhande. When in 1926 a regular College of music was founded in Lucknow, Shri Dilip Kumar Roy persuaded his two cousins Shri Hemendralal and Rabindralal Roy (father of mrs. Malabika Kanan) to seek admission in the first batch of graduates. All the three Roys were thus intimately associated with the mission of Pt. Bhatkhande till his death in 1936. Since his early days Shri Dilip Kumar Roy had a leaning towards the life and mission of Shri Arbindo. Later on he actually joined the Poona Ashram of Shri Arbindo and devoted his life in the services of the Ashram in Poona and Pondechery. His ardent appeal to cultured and educated lovers of music has not lost its relavence even now.

Thumri has genearally speaking got into the bad books of

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classical musicians as well as connoisseurs. That is to say, classical musicians as well as connoisseurs are found to be rather prone to wax eloquent - in nine cases out of ten over the candemnation of Thumri as a cheap kind of music which may charm only the philistines. Thumri singers are hardly recognised by these classicits as having any title to be looked upon as musicians. This is not an exaggertion. Kheyal Singers have been known to leave a musical gathering in pious horror, if a Thumri singer should have had the hardihood to offer to pollute the atmosphere rendered sacrosanct by their previous kheyal singing. Dhrupad singers, who formerly took up the identical attitude towards the same injured kheyalias, do not even think it worth while to take any notice of Thumri. Their utmost reaction to the appeal of Thumri is perhaps the condescension of a fleeting while of unconcealed contempt. I do not mean to imply that no classicist can be found who is holy enough to see any beauty in the much-abused Thumri music. I only want to class genuine souls under the category of exceptions.

It is not so difficult however to comperehened the view point of such indigant condemnatrs of subtle types of music like Tappa of Thumri. The human nature in the masses behaves like an inanimate object which is so proverbilly founf of what is known as Newtons Law of Inertia. This low states that no object has an innate tendency to change its state of rest or uniform motion in a straight line except in so far as it be compelled by external impressed forcase to change that state. In a word, this means in the case of human maid, that the latter ill-brooks any movement which tends to change its old habits of viewing things and time-hallowed ruts of belies of prejudices. It is not well known for instance how a time old habit or dictum tends to become apaurusheya (i.e. infallible in its wisdom) through the mere passage of time? This applies not only to our social or religious credos, but to our artistic conception as well. Thus we are prone to look askance at any innovation or departure from our artistic traditions in the realm of art just as much as in any other sphere of human activity. The Dhrupadiya's denunciation of Kheyal is but one of the numerous illustrations of the truth of this statement. Kheyal nevertheless came to stay, as our revered Pandit Bhatkhande assured an 'anti-Kheyalia' the other day in my presence (much to my satisfaction, I must own. I should like to say about the same thing with respect to Thumri which is as much of a permanent asset in our artistic evolutions as Dhrupad or Kheyal is. This statement, though it may sound a little hazardous on the surface, is nevertheless true at bottom as will be endeavour of my present article to prove.

In order to assign its proper place in the scale of values to Thumri music, it will be found useful to trace its birth and discuss its raison d'etre. That is to say it will be helpful to make a brief survey of its nascence and growth in the context of its

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musical traditions. For that will enable us to look at it in the proper perspective.

As is well-known, Dhrupad is the oldest music still extant. At the time of the Pathan invasion of India, Dhrupad was practically the only highly-evolved type of music. The Pathan conquerors of Hindustan took it in hand since it gradually appealed to them. By and by however Dhrupad was found to pall on them as is bound to happen in the case of any class of music even if it be the unique music of a people otherwise advanced in civilization. "Variety is the spice of life" - says the poet. It is also the life of art. I mean thereby that no art, however great, can satisfy the eternal craving of the human soul for beauty, if it does not evolve itself more and more with time. That is why new vistas in art have to be opend out from time to time by creative artists for humanity athirst for novelty and variety. This need not be taken to cast an odium on the art which is old. Nothing is farther from my intention. For I am fully alive to the fact that an art which is classic generally comes to stay. Only it falls if variety in the form of newer developments of the same is not super-added from time to time. There is no reason therefore why time-old classic types of music like Dhrupad should not co-exist with later types of music such as Kheyal, Tappa and Thumri. It was because the music-lovers had sort of sensed this truth that Kheyal was created by Amir Khusru and Sadarang - to the eternal glory of the Mahommedan creative genius.

The result was that the two types of music have since then existed side by side to set each other off. I think this is quite *comme il faut*. Kheyalias recognised the necessity of variety and ornamentation in music-and they are to be felicitated for their timely intervention. Now the same necessity (viz, that of finding greater fulfilment of the thirst for variety in music) which prompted the early Kheyalias to strike off on a new path as it were in the further evolution of our classical music, urged later composers like Golamnabi (commonly known as Sori Mian) to invent Tappa, and his successors -Thumri. Kheyal was ushered in because Dhrupad was felt to be (1) lacking in ornamentation;(2) too subservient to the demands or rhythm; & (3) offering comparatively little scope for improvisation. Thus Kheyal ministered to a deep hankering of the human soul in the realm of music, namely that of bodying forth new beauties at every step in the shape of improvisations. It was comparatively untrammelled by the demands of the rhythmic structure of Dhrupad. It was consequently a great advance on Dhrupad as every right thinking catholic judge must allow.

Now the same necessity which impelled composers like Amir Khusro and Sadarang to strike out a new path in the direction of Kheyal, prompted later musicians to evolve Thumri. I am of the opinion therefore that it is as unjust for the present champions of Kheyal to vituperise Thumri as it was for the quondam champions

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of Dhrupad to condemn kheyal. I have suggested why such evolution of anything new in art must meet with a great deal of unreasoning opposition at the outset. I will next set about pointing out why such opposition is all but sure to prove abortive in its attempt to stifle the increasing popularity of Thumri-just as even the withering glance of Dhrupadiyas was unable to blast the evolution of Kheyal.

For this it will be helpful to pause here a little and try to consider where it is that Kheyal differed essentially from Dhrupad as well as what fundamental aspirations of the musical craving it (i.e. Kheyal) catered to. I have pointed out that Kheyal differed principally from Dhrupad in that it afforded scope for the creative genius of the artist to soar high and lose itself as it were in search of novelties in the shape of improvisations. Not that Dhrupad did not offer any scope to the musician in this direction viz. that of improvization. Dhrupad alap, rhythmic variations known as tans etc. did afford him a certain amount of scope to improvise. But it did not go far enough. For tans, frills and other subtler improvizations had to be brought in which Dhrupad did not brook.

Kheyal supplied this need of the Musician and everybody knows how beautiful it becomes with a proper admixture of meends, tans and other ornamentations of the musician, who is comparatively unhampered by the demands of the rigid rhythmic structure of Dhrupad, consequently Kheyal fared well, much to the chagrin of orthodox Dhrupadiyas.

To take up the thread where I left off, I will be concerned that is, to show now how the likelihood of Thumri prospering in the next phase of our musical evolution is about as much of a certainty. For that end, it will be well to consider first how Thumri in its turn ministers to a real need of the artist not supplied by any other class of music.

Where is it that Thumri differs essentially from Kheyal? This question must be answered first of all for the classification of our ideas. Where indeed? There are many points of contact between Thumri and Kheyal just as there are between superior classes of Kheyal and Dhrupad. I will however limit myself principally to bringing into relief the points of dissimilarity-as that would be more to my purpose.

Kheyal, as I have pointed out, furnished a great deal of scope for improvisation to the artist and is as such at least as great an achievement in Indian musical culture as Dhrupad. Now comes my principal point in favour of Thumri, viz. that Thumri affords a still greater scope for the expression of the subtler lights and shades of our emotion than Kheyal does. In other words, Thumri expresses the nuance and everchanging perception of beauty with a delicacy of touch which would be altogether beyond strict Kheyal. Every one who has heard a beautiful Thumri singer cannot but feel how the latter satisfies some innate craving of his, which

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has been so delicately expressed by the immortal poet when he sang :-

I pant for the music which is divine,
My heart in its thirst is a dying flower,
Pour forth sound like enchanted wine,
Loosen the notes in a silver shower. (Shelly)

A lovely Thumri with its divine delicacy, fleeting finesse and iridescent evanescence makes the listener feel as it were,

As one who drinks from a charmed cup,
Of foaming, ands parkling and murmuring wine,
Whom a mighty enchantress filling up,
Invites to love with her kiss divine. (Ibid)

The emotion that a really artistic Thumri can evoke is essentially of a nature uninspirable by any other class of music to my knowledge. The real glory of Thumri lies in its taking cognizance of the subtle shades of evanescent emotions that succeed one after the other in the musical experiences of the artist in his sacred moments of undoubted inspiration. That is why Thumri must need be a little kaleidoscopic in the exuberance of its presentation. Thus what it suffers in lack of restraint (compared to first class Dhrupad or Kheyal) is more than compensated for by the delicacy of its nuances. What it suffers in lack of grandeur is made up by the ardour and warmth of its living appeal.

To come from the subtly rich aesthetic effects of Thumri to its method and design of producing the Same,-Thumri, as is well-known, enjoys greater latitude than Kheyal in so far as the demands of the rigidity of the melodic structure is concerned. Or in other words, the ideal of Thumri, unlike that of Kheyal, does not lie in the presentation of a Raga in its purity. The aspiration of Thumri consists in the presentation of the minutest changes of the musical emotions of the artist. Thus the term 'correct singing' is, unlike in Kheyal, almost meaningless in Thumri. The result is that the Thumri artist is practically untrammelled by considerations of purity of the Raga in his exploration of the beautiful. For does he not enjoy the latitude of passing from one Raga to the other? Does he not revel in the almost complete freedom of expressing what he feels, undeterred by considerations of technique? He can therefore afford to concentrate on the faithful expression of his ever changing emotions in a way which would be impossible in its very nature in Kheyal singing. Herein consists the principal achievement of Thumri, (Here the writer sang a song to show how different Ragas keep coming in Thumri and with what artistic effect).

The question here naturally presents itself whether such unbridled liberty in musical improvisations is good in the long run. For does not this often involve the degeneration of liberty into license?

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Besides does not this tend to make one Thumri sound too much like the other, there by rendering the melodies rather monotonous? It must be admitted that there is force in such arguments and predictions. For thumri as it is sung to-day very often suffers from these drawbacks. In Kheyals there is a healthy ideal of restraint, comparatively speaking, which renders them enjoyable for a long time. Besides, in the enjoyment of Khēyal there is this undoubted satisfaction that is to be derived from differentiating one Raga from another. Aristotle has rightly pointed out the unquestioned pleasure in the very fact of recognition. In Thumri shades of different Ragas always keep coming in, so that sometimes the protracted enjoyment of one Raga is marred by too frequent transitions into snatches of other Ragas. Every music lover must testify to the deep satisfication that is to be derived from the dhyana of one Raga. When a musician improvises on one Raga the atmosphere that he creates round him becomes truly delicious. In Thumri music however no such definite atmosphere need be preserved. There are often enough too frequent surprises in the course of a single song, the effects of which may militate against each other unless the singer has a proper sense of proportion. Not so with Kheyal.

The foregoing considerations cannot but bring into relief as it were some points where Thumri is bound to be inferior to Kheyal but that does not imply that Thumri should be discarded in favour of Kheyal in consequence. For Thumri also possesses charms which are peculiar to itself-as I have already suggested. I see no earthly reason why Thumri must not exist side by side with Kheyal just as there is no reason why Kheyal should not prosper simultaneously with Dhrupad. Each of these classes of Music possesses a classic element which cannot fail to appeal to the catholic music-lover. Each therefore is going to stand on its own merit, and the sum total effect cannot but be a happy one, if only we take good care to be discriminating in our appraisal of the relative merits of each class of music. What I am up in arms against is the ventilation of the opinion that Thumri is en somme inferior to Dhrupad or Kheyal, simply because the latter can boast of beauties not possessed by the former. For is not Thumri also great in its own line? I say this with conviction that it is positively great, its inevitable shortcomings notwithstanding. Every class of music must have its own shortcoming for that matter due to the limitations peculiar to itself. To run it down because of such limitations is like blaming a creature for being itself. The rose says to the butterfly : "I pity you because you lack fragrance." The butterfly may well retaliate : "I pity you cannot fly." Is it not as idle to condemn the rose for its immobility as it is to reproach the butterfly for its inodorousness?

If however the claim of Thumri to greatness has to be made good, the charge of monotony often laid at its door must be met.

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For no art can have any real pretensions to greatness if it palls on one comparatively soon. I do not think however that although Thumri is intrinsically inferior to Kheyal in some respects it must be inferior to the latter in point of variety as well. The truth of this statement cannot but have come home to one who has had the opportunity of hearing such beautiful Thumri singers as Fyaz Khan, Acchan Bai or Janki Bai whom one can hear for hours. Unfortunately for Thumri its repetitions often tend to monotony in the execution of most of our uncultured musicians of today who care more often for a display of their technical skill rather than artistic perception. But a Thumri singer who is a real artist can easily prove that this tendency is by no means an inherent one in the very possibilities of Thumri. Besides it should not be forgotten that Thumri is still in its teens; that it is not yet evolved enough; and that unlike Kheyal, the codes of its exposition have not yet been formulated, far less classified. We have not yet had, that is, enough data to go upon. Dhrupad has fairly exhausted itself. Kheyal though not antiquated yet shows unmistakable signs of almost complete maturity. Thumri however is still like a stripling which stands in need of a tender looking after. Its aspirations must be sympathised with, if it is to find itself and realise its potentialities in the near future. For we must not be blind to the circumstance that Thumri has already given a promise which does justify the highest hope of its future.

Classicist often cry Thumri down as being the province of women and bayaderes. This is not just. Neither does it reflect any credit on the sobriety of judgement of such denunciators. For how on earth can the mere fact of women being able to sing Thumri with effect be used as an argument against its greatness? Besides, the very assumption is unwarranted that men are incapable of singing Thumri as well as women. One has only to hear the Thumri of men like Abdul Karim or Maijuddin Khan to be convinced of this. Of course women singers cannot but add their womanly grace and delicate fervour to their music. But then the Thumri of men singers will in its turn be instilled with masculine confidence and virility. Each has its own charm; each possesses qualities which are peculiar to itself. What is needed to bear in mind is that no noble art can be intended to be the monopoly of one sex. The criterion of a true artistic exposition is that it should be a sincere expression of some aesthetic emotion actually felt by the artist. Thus so long as a Thumri singer passes this test there is no reason why his or her expression should not be artistic. This is but commonsense and as such I hardly need expatiate on it any further. I want only to add that a good deal of the prejudice of the Ustad who prefers to look superior to Thumri (contending that it is an effeminate art) is attributable to his jealousy of the best lady singers who often succeed in out-distancing the former in truly artistic exposition.

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Then there is another erroneous notion abroad that Thumri can be sung by anybody and every body. Nothing can be further from truth. For in order to be able to sing Thumri really well one must first of all be capable of expression in an eminent degree as the soul of Thumri lies in expression and not mere technical skill however wonderful. For instance a Thumri singer must take special care to produce what may be metaphorically described as light and shade effect by voice. In other words a singer whose voice is not melidious, nor able to lend colour to the fine nuances of expression cannot but fail hopelessly as a Thumri singer. In Kheyal he may fare better even without such eminent voice effects. For in the latter case he may produce a good deal of effect by his technical skill or by his power of differentiating between kindred Ragas. But this will not stand him in good stead in Thumri; for there correctness matters little even to the extent of being almost meaningless, as I have said, the essence of its beauty lying in subtlety in expression. (Here the writer sang a *piloo* trying to illustrate voice effects in Thumri).

There is another idea at the back of most people's minds viz. that Thumri singing requires neither any musical knowledge nor any systematic training. such a view is substantially incorrect. For a Thumri singer must learn Kheyal well if he should want to sing Thumri effectively. For in Thumri there is almost boundless scope for the introduction of beauties of the Kheyal style. The other day Fyaz Khan sang some Bhairavi Thumris at this conference exemplifying the truth of the above statement, as must have been apparent to all connoisseurs of Kheyal. A musical friend of mine had once aptly remarked to me that one must be well up in Kheyal in order to be able to sing Thumri *comme il faut*. His statement was but too true paradoxical though it may seem on the surface. For in order to be able to give a definite direction to the manifold possibilities of Thumri, a singer cannot do better than take a systematic training in Kheyal. To pass from one Raga to others for instance presupposes a sound knowledge of the latter, I refrain from citing other instances only because that would make my article spin out to an unnecessary length.

I desist to-day from suggesting specific lines along which the Thumri of the future should (and in my opinion bids fair to) develope itself, because a mere administration of the same would be of little use without copious illustrations. In fine therefore I will confine myself to remarking only this that it is going to be extremely helpful to study as well as experiment in the potentialities of Thumri in the evolution of our classical music; and the sooner our educated classes take kindly to it in a catholic spirit of appreciation the better will be the harvest that going to be theirs. For it is my earnest contention that if only really cultured men will take to it in a sincere spirit of research, our beautiful Thumri will gain more and more in dignity. It will then

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rid itself of the flippancy and frivolity with which it has to-day come to be associated in the hands of our unimaginative professionals who can at best give us only fugitive flashes of an ethereal vista which it is up to the magic wand of music alone to open out.

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The Pregression of Thumri Towards Abstraction

Prabha Atre

Folk music has always been a great source of inspiration for art music and has continuoiusly enriched art music in terms of musical material, style, expression and themes. Many musical forms have possibly undergone changes byh assimilating influnces from different sourcs and have reappeared with new looks and new names. Enterprising musiclans are constantly engaged in moulding contemporaryy forms to meet the demands of changing times. One such vocal form is the thumri, which has its roots in folk music and has flowered as an art form.

Words As Muscal Material : In addition to tone and time, there is one more component in vocal music-words-which become a part of the musical material. Knowing that human beings can produce sound only through vowels and consonants, Indian musicians have intelligently explored a variety of expresions through words - vorfds with meaning and syllablés without meaning. Indeed, words have helped in bringing variey and novelty into the musical material of vocal music. This material comprises four types of-phrases - Alpa, Tan, Sargam and bols, i.e. phrases with words. In the last category, i.e. phrases with words, there are five sub-varieties - Bol-alap, Bol-upaj, Bol-tan, Bol-banao & Bol-bant. As these phrases use syllables or words of the pre-composed song (Bandish), they help in bringing a variety in articulation, introducing a rhythmic element as well as lending emotional colour to the phrases.

The primary function of words/syllables in Bol-alap (Slow phrases) Bol-upaj (medium tempo phrases) and Bol-tan (fast phrases) is to bring variety in articulation and help in rhythmic improvisation. Here the emotional content of the words has secondary place. In Bol-banao and Bol-bant, there is a consious effort all the time to compose phrases in such a way as to project the emotionalcontent of the words. Bol-banao has leisurely movements while Bol-bant includes rhythmic movements. Thus each type of phrases - Bol-alap, Bol-upaj, Bol-tan, Bol-banao and Boi-bant has a distinct quality and its own utility in the making of music.

Vocal Forms And Words : Besides bringing variety to the musicalmaterial, words also play an important role inthe creation of forms in vocal music. The classification of art forms into thre categories - classical, light-classical nd light music is based on the relative importance of either the Raga or words or both in a particular forms. Each form selects its material and moulds it in a special way in terms of tonal texture, design, form, technique, expression of aesthetic, literary or emotional content and

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overall presentation. The selection and treatment of the material give the form its identity. For example, alaps in Dhrupad differ from alaps in Khyal and Thumri. Tans in Khyal differ from tans in Tappa. Bol-bant in Dhrupad and Khyal differs form Bol-bant in Thumri and Bol-banao is special to Thumri only.

Ligh-Classical Form : Thumri : The vocal form 'Thumri' has beeb placed in the light classical category because of its close attention to both raga and words. Raga-oriented phrases in a Thumri compose themselves artisticully and beautifully to fit into the characteristic phrases and expression of the form. Thus, music and words complement each other and still retain their identity.

The early association of Thumri with Dance led to emphasis being placed on Bol-bant i.e. rhythmic improvisation of the text. Whe 'Thumri' stepped on to the concert platform, its emphasis shifted to melodicimprovisation of the text i.e. Bol-banao. In this transition from Bol-bant toBol-bTnao, the tempo of Thumri slowed down considerably making roomQfor improvisation. The rhythm free phrase in the textual elaboration knowingly - unknowingly tried to free themselves from the words. The flexible text of the Thumri indeed helped this process. Since then Thumri has slowly been evolving as an abstract musical form, relatively independent of words and their meaning.

Thumri Text : Thumri texts are simple and use a limited vocabulary of words. There is no identifiable literary form or rigid pattern as in the texts of Geet, Ghazal and Bhajan. Secondly, the integrity of the words structure in Thumri is not as high as in Geet, Gazal - words stretch themselves to fit into the characteristic phrases.

Thirdly, the emotions portrayed in Thumri texts are broad-based; The texts expressing different sentiments - joy, sorrow etc. use the same stereotyped melodic structure for refrain or Mukhada and the same melodic phrases and ornamentations for the elaboration of the text. All these factors contribute to the easy musical improvisation of the text, and in turn to develop the abstract potential of the Thumri.

For Example

(a) Raga Khamaj ;

(1)	G	G	M	G	R	G	M	P	P	(Melody)
	Kaun	na	ga	li	-	ga	yo	Shya	ma	(text)
(2)	Aai	Si	na	ma	ro	pi	cha	ka	ri	(text)

It is the same melodic strain for different texts.

(b) Raga Kafi :

S R R G R M M P P -(Melody)

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(1)	Pi	ya	to	ma	-	na	ta	na	hi -(text)
(2)	Khe	la	ta	Nan	-	da	ku	ma	re -(text)

Here also the same melodic strain (Mukhada) for different texts.

(c) Raga Das :

	R	M	P	N	S	N	S	n	D P(Molody)
(1)	Aa	- -	-	-	-	-	-	vo	- -(text)
(2)	Ja	-	-	-	-	-	-	vo	- -(text)

Here the same melodic phrase is employed for words having just the opposite literary meaning.

One comes acress so many other of the same type.

By and large, the themes and the words in vocal art forms are the same. It is, therefore, possible to use the same word composition (with slight changes to suit only the rhythmic pattern) for various forms under different categories classical (Dhamar or Khyal), light classical (Thumri or Dadra) and light (Bhajan). The melodic strudcture of the same word composition however will differ with each form because of the characteristic pharasea and expressions relevant to the form.

In light music, the word composition itself represents a complete form ; elaboration of the form in this case is not necessary. In classical and light classical categories, the word composition is only a part of the musical material of the form and unless the characteristic musical phrases are woven around the word composition, the form remains incomplete. The fact that these characteristic musical pharases can be rendered without using words or using meaningless words and can also be played without words on an instrument shows that the words can be ignored, they are bnot essential to establish the Thumri form. Needless to say, words lend specific meaning to the phrases in vocal Thumri and enrich its overall expression. In this respect vocalists always have the advantages over instrumentalists. They can express specific emotions through words.

Raga : Thumris usually employ the so-called light ragas - i.e. ragas having close links especially with folk tunes. But for textual elaboratrion, most of the time the Thumri borrows phrases from serious ragas, of course, these phrases are adapted to suit Thumri expressions. The point to be stressed here is that, besides the inherent potential of the scale of the raga, it is the treatment of the melodic material of the raga in a specific way which makes it light or heavy. It may also be noted that the so-called light ragas themselves are maturing as time passes and Khyal singers and instrumentalists today treat quite a few of them as major ragas. Thus, although for projecting the literary contents expressed

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in the Thumri text, the singerdraws inspiration from the words, he leans on the raga and its aesthetic or emotional appeal for textual elaboration.

Not only this, but the singer must know well the system of Murchana and how to transit artistically from one raga into another, using the typical expressions andornamentations of the form, without sacrificing the homogenity of the total structure. At this point, the raga itself serves as the source of inspiration in presenting the Thumri.

Tala : Another interesting thing to note is that the tala most often employed today in the Thumri - Dadra family reflects a peculiar choice in their theka - bols. Every beat of the tal has one syllable.

For Example

(1) Tala Deepchandi :

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Dha	hin	-	dha	dha	dhin	-	ta	tin	-	ta	ta	dhin	-

(2) Tal Keherwa :

Dha	gi	ha	ti	na	ka	dhi	na
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

(3)

Dha	dhi	na,	dha	ti	na
1	2	3	4	5	6

In these three tals, since each beat has one syllable, the space between two beats is 'quiet' muted - without any syllable. To make this point more clearer in the theka of Tal Ektal, the word Tirakita used for the 4th and the 10th beat is made up of 4 syllables Ti + ra + ki + ta. This word occuples the whole space between the 4th & 5th beat and again the 10th & 11th beat. Tals like Rupak, Zaptal, Teental and even Dhamar, which are very common in classical forms, are also used for Thumri text, and interestingly they too use one syllable for each beat of theTal.

For Example :

(1) Tal Dhamar

Ka	dhi	ta	dhi	ta	dhi	-,
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

ka	ti	ka	ti	ta	ta	-
8	9	10	11	12	13	14

(2) Tal Teental :

Na	dhin	dhin	na,	Na	dhin	dhin	na,
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8,

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na	tin	tin	na,	na	dhin	dhin	na
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

(3) Tal Zaptal :

Dhi	na,	dhi	dhi	na,	ti	na,	ti	ti	na
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

(4) Tal Rupak :

Ti	ti	na	dhin	na	dhi	na
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

One syllable for a beat - this aspect of the theka may allow more freedom to the movements of the phrases and the expressions of the words in Bol-banao. Perhaps because of this choice Punjabi Tal is rerely heard today with Thumri texes.

Thus, barring a few ragas and tals, Thumri can be convelently sung in many ragas and tals that pure classical abstract form - Khyal is using today. The easy transition of many bol-bant thumris to chota khyals indicates the vulnerable positon of these two forms.

Enterprising musicians have composed Thumri - Dadra songs in serlous ragas and even some of the new compositions in light ragas exhibit a change in melodic contours.

The Use Of Pure Musical Material : Compared to the phrases with bols in which pharases get coloured with the literary meaning of the words, Alap, Tan and Sargam are considered pure musical material because they convey only the musical meaning.

Therefore, when Tan and Sargam enter into the Thumri as decorative phrases, not only do they enhance the beauty of Thumri but also add to its inherent abstract musical aspect.

Laggi : The laggi in the tabla accompaniment had an important role in thumri when Thumri was associated with dance. When Thumri dissociated itself from dance, the laggi still survived regardless of the emotional content of the theme - even when the song was one of separation, longing. The role Laggi now played was to help the Thumri to evolve itself as a musical form independent of Dance and the meaning of the refrain and producing a climatic musical excitement - Laggi appeared as a musical need of the Thumri form. The Laggi has thus helped to evolve the abstract character of Thumri.

The Freedom which Thumri enjoys today in respect of choice of Raga, Tal, musical material, expression, treatment and development shows a new dimension of its form. The boundaries or limitaions of its form need to be studied carefully in the context of changing times. Like Khyal, Thumri also is adapting itself for survival. Its fight to mature towards a greater abstraction of form is really commendable. It is perhaps natural that all the less abstract vocal art forms should aspire to the status of Khyal, which represents the most abstract vocal art form.

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Thumri : An Appraisal

Mohan Nadkarni

Is Thumri, as a singing genre, going out of vogue ? One tends to feel frightfully so, if one goes by the changing trends on the Indian musical scene. Specially during the last three decades, the kind of changes coming around "R" appear to carry an element of insouciance which is ominous to the future of this style of singing.

Thumri, which came into fashion in the 18th century, represents the most significant phase in the evolution of Hindustani classical music. It may well be the first genre to vanish gradually from the classical music scene.

Thumri has been described as the expression of the singer's soul and temperament. It is romantic or devotional in its content. The stress in thumri-singing, unlike dhrupad and khayal, is not so much on melodic unfoldment as on the portrayal of the mood enshrined in the lyric. Imagination thus plays a crucial role in the depiction of thumri. It calls for a sense of restraint - and discrimination, too - on the singer's part, as the expressive aspect of the poetic theme is so basic to its delineation. The singer has to comprehend the lyrical motivations of the chosen song to be able to give full musical expression to the emotion it contains. Voice - modulation and delicate intonation are two of the several essential features of thumri. Naturally, in the process, the singer is allowed freedom to conjure a variety of ornamentations, such as *meend, murki, khatka, zamzama* and the like, in vivifying the mood of the theme.

As is well known, the term thumri is derived from *thumak*, which means "graceful stamping of the foot". The term is also said to have been derived from a combination of the words thumak and *rijhana*. This connotes association with dance. The song - form evolved in the eastern region (*purab*) of Uttar Pradesh initially as an accompanying song of dance. The idea was to make dance movements more expressive, more abiding. Primarily, thumri's emergence can be said to have symbolised a kind of reaction to its immediate predecessor, the khayal, in which permutations and combinations of musical sounds enjoy precedence over the poetic virtues of song themes. Equally significant is the fact that this period also marked the twilight of the Moghul rule. The princely patrons of music, lolling in luxury and sensual pleasures, had now little use for sombre, dignified musical entertainment. Added to this was their obsessive fondness for fun and frolic. This brought forth a new style which could pander to their moods and caprices in a thousand ways.

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That was how thumri found a congenial atmosphere during the reign of Wajid Ali Shah, the last Nawab of Avadh. He was possibly the greatest known patron of thumri, raas and kathak dance. Year after year, he used to organise a mammoth raas show, with the sport of Lord Krishna and the gopis as the theme. And with his consuming passion for poetry and music, he himself played an active role in their presentation. In the Nawab's scheme of things, any talented artiste would participate in his song-and-dance concerts with the predictable preponderance of young women among the performers. They depicted their nritya-bhava and also offered their *mujra* through thumri songs; which explains why this song-form was once considered as the exclusive preserve of female singers. Indeed, it came to be conventionally regarded as a feminine style par excellence.

Wajid Ali Shah was himself a composer of no mean merit. He wrote lyrics under the nick-name *"Akhtar Piya"*. He also patronised masters of the eminence of Kudau Singh, the pakhavaj wizard, and Maharaj Binda Din, the pioneering maestro of the Kathak dance tradition. In fact, it was a galaxy of thumri composers that enjoyed the Nawab's patronage. They included Kalika Prasad who, along with his brother, Binda Din, composed thumri-s which lent themselves to *nritya-bhava*, and featured them through their dance. Chand Piya, Daras Piya and Lalan Piya were among other luminaries who pioneered and enriched the thumri genre with their individual versatility.

In time to come thumri evolved into two different streams emanating from Lucknow and Varanasi (Banaras). In the Lucknow style, the subject - matter of thumri is usually an Urdu poem or ghazal. In the Banaras variety, there is tappa element in the unfolding. In one, known as *bol-bant-ki-thumri*, there is stress on rhythm, which is *thumak*. In the other, artha-bhava ki thumri, there is more of *rijhana*, that is, entertaining quality. There is also the *bol-banao* variety, which embodies a combination of both the types just mentioned.

The ragas most commonly suited to thumri-singing are : Bhairavi, Jhinjhoti, Desh, Tilak-Kamod, Khamaj, Kafi, Pilu, Tilang, Gara, Mand and Jogia. The talas employed are : Deepchandi, Teentala, Sitarkhani, Chachar, Punjabi Theka and Addha. All these taken together, make up the rich and varied *Purab-ang gayaki*.

In the course of its progress and development, the thumri tradition also gave birth to a number of charming variations t'ased on the folk-tunes of the region. Dadra, Kajri and Chaiti are the popular variations of thumri, also in vogue in the eastern region of Uttar Pradesh. These are all sweetly redolent of folk flavour. The Dadra variety is conventionally rendered after a regular thumri composition. Incidentally, it will have been noted that the term Dadra here has no relation to the time-cycle of the same name. It only connotes a style of singing. It is rendered to various talas

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of light classical music, including Dadra as well. But the emphasis is, of course, on the rhythmic lilt and, for this reason, its effective presentation is more difficult than that of thumri. The dominant mood in a Dadra song is erotic.

Kajri is basically a monsoon song, designed to convey the mood of separation expressed by the beloved. *Chaiti*, on the other hand, is associated with the period of transition from the spring to the summer season. Thematically, the *Chaiti* songs express the Holi spirit and the fun and abandon that go with the season's festivity. This song form has a sensuous appeal of its own. The dominant mood is, of course, shrinagar. There is still another variety, known as *Hori thumri*, which almost resembles *Chaiti*.

The great founding fathers of the thumri tradition were also able teachers. They reared their own brilliant *shishya parampara-s* which carried forward and enriched the precious bequest for several decades. It is not possible to recount all the leading lights that flourished during that glorious period. Suffice it to say that among these were Bhayya Ganpatrao, Maujuddin Khan, Pyara Saheb, Zohrabai, Gohar Jan, Jankibai, Badi Moti Bai and Vidyadhari Bai. These are only names with us of the present generation. Some of them, like Zohrabai and Janakibai, had their music recorded for the gramophone in the early years of this century and their discs are still found in the homes of old-time connoisseurs.

But it is the succeeding generation represented by stalwarts like Siddheshwari Devi, Rasoolan Bai and Begum Akhtar, that played a momentous role towards popularising thumri among the everwidening audiences. This they did, not only through their stage concerts but also through their radio programmes and commercial discs. Whenever and wherever they sang, they held their audiences spell-bound for hours, and sent them home with gladdened hearts. Each of them ruled supreme in their own way for nearly three decades. It is truly tragic that all these three great artistes passed away, one after another, in a mere five years - in the seventies. With their death, it can also be truly said that thumri, as an authentic genre, began to suffer a gradual decline.

To say this, however, is certainly not to suggest that we do not have great exponents of that tradition with us any longer. We do have them, but they are rather few, too few - and also fast advancing in age. Before evaluating their contribution, it seems necessary to take into accou the emergence of two more variations of thumri which came to be evolved and popularised outside the region of its birth.

Chronologically speaking, it will be pertinent to mention first the style pioneered by Abdul Karim Khan. He is also acknowled as the founding father of the contemporary Kirana gharana. He gave a new dimension to the concept of thumri, in that he transformed it from its basically artha- pradhan character to a *swara-pradhan one*. The Ustad was a romantic classicist and his approach

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to ragas was deeply emotional. The sweetness of his voice and his feeling manner of intonation lent a hypnotic quality to whatever he sang. It could even move the listeners to tears. This was also true of his thumri music. He could convey through his impassioned singing what the lyrical content of his thumri was supposed to do. It would seem that it simply did not matter to his listeners if the enunciation of the song-text sounded faulty or indistinct or incomplete. Such was the powerful impact of his singing.

Bade Ghulam Ali Khan was another innovative genius who also created a stir among the orthodox votaries by his own brand of thumri. Like Abdul Karim Khan, he is also regarded as the pioneer of the contemporary Patiala gharana. Like him, again, he was a romantic classicist. His version of thumri embodied an uncanny blend of choice folk-tunes and accents from Punjab with the traditional features of the Purab-ang thumri. Although, much later, this variety achieved recognition as a trend-setter in light classical music, sticklers for tradition still look askance at its authenticity. Bade Ghulam Ali, on his part, stoutly denied that his style of thumri-singing was a departure from tradition. His contention was that the compositions sung by him are all in the languages of eastern Uttar Pradesh and they are sung in the traditional style wherever Hindustani music is in vogue. One may or may not agree with the maestro's standpoint. One has, however, sadly to concede the misgivings in the minds of the purists that under the impact of the Punjab- style innovation, the pristine Purab tradition would eventually pale into oblivion. The contemporary scene does seem to portend such a possibility.

Let me now attempt a survey of the contemporary thumri scene. As mentioned earlier, with the passing away of so many stalwarts within a short span of time, the thumri tradition is left with few luminaries like Girija Devi and Shobha Gurtu. Both these artistes are nearly 60. Girija Devi, possibly the only surviving exponent of the Varanasi-style thumri, has been a versatile artiste. She has moved her audiences with her phenomeanl repertoire of the glorious parampara and has also enriched it in the process. The few discs she has cared to cut are there to testify to her originality and virtuosity in the field.

Girija Devi has been a guru-in-residence at the Sangeet Research Academy of ITC at Calcutta. She has been engaged in grooming a few disciples seriously and sincerely. Dalia Rahut and Mahua Dasgupta are her only disciples, whom I have had the pleasure to hear till now. Tragically, young Mahua passed away. She had just reached her twenties and held out much flowering promise. Dalia Rahut, who is older, presents claims to recognition as a talented artiste from the youngster set. But the depressing fact is that artists like her have still not found a place in major musical events held all over the country from year to year.

Shobha Gurtu, who hails from Goa, has not had the benefit

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of professional grooming directly from thumri veterans of North India. In that sense, she can be regarded as a self-taught exponent of the genre. Indeed, it speaks volumes for her talent and genius that she has assimilated so effectively the quintessence of the *Purab-ang* tradition. In her singing, one senses a subtle amalgam of the gayakis of Begum Akhtar, Siddheshwari Devi and Rasoolan Bai. Her finesse for ghazal-singing lends a new elan to her musical attainments. Amid her busy concert engagements, she devotes time to teaching. Sarla Bhide, Subha Joshi, and lately, Chhaya Ganguli, strike me as her gifted disciples. However, like most of our young deserving talent, they have been made to keep waiting in the wings by sponsors of today's commercially-organised *Sangeet Sammelans*. Unless they are given timely and proper encouragement, they might well languish away in comparative obscurity.

Mention must also be made of Hiradevi Mishra, a contemporary of Girija Devi and Shobha Gurtu. Though no less gifted, she was far less lucky than her two confreres and died an untimely death a little over two years ago, without due recognition. She taught many disciples. But only Chhaya Ganguli could possibly absorb some of the fine elements of her music.

Other names of thumri singers that come to mind are those of Savita Devi, daughter of Siddheshwari Devi; Rita Ganguli, who has been guided by Siddheshwari Devi and many other leading lights of thumri and ghazal music; Shanti Hiranand and Naina Devi, disciples, respectively of Begum Akhtar and Rasoolan Bai; and Bombay-based Kaumudi Munshi, who also had grooming from Siddheshwari Devi. All said and done, however, it would appear that none of them have been able to measure up to the eminence of their respective mentors.

So much for the exponents of the Purab-style thumri. The Punjab technique of Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, indeed, attracted a surprisingly large following. Foremost among the exponents of this genre was perhaps Barkat Ali Khan, the Ustad's younger brother. But amid the effulgent glory of his elder brother, he found himself bereft of the limelight richly due to him in his own right - and he died in middle age, unrecognised. The long line-up of other of artistes includes Lakshmi Shankar, Nirmala Devi, Sandhya Mukherjee and Parveen Sultana. By and large, however, while they seem to reveal a thorough grasp of the mechanics of thumri music they also appear more concerned to impress than express. They have extremely fine voices, but they evidently mistake technique for value. On a wider plane, it is sad to see that the Punjab style has degenerated so much that it is being misused in film music and other cheaper stuff. It is, as though, the style has gone away with Bade Ghulam Ali Khan and Barkat Ali Khan.

So would appear to be the case with the thumri genre started

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by Abdul Karim Khan. Hirabai Badodekar and her late lamented brother, Sureshbabu Mane, and Sawai Gandharva, all disciples of the Ustad, were master interpreters of the style. The same cannot be fairly said about Bhimsen Joshi, though he is today's leading light of the Kirana gharana. But there is something to be said for Prabha Atre as the only authentic exponent of the Kirana thumri. But her concert appearances are rather few.

Finally, a brief mention of some of the factors that would possibly hasten the further decline of the thumri tradition. First comes the deleterious effect of film music on our thumri and other light classical and lighter vogues. Possibly, it may not be long before the distinctive motives that differentiate between thumri, ghazal, geet and even bhajan get completely obliterated. Then comes the fast-changing musical scene itself. It is important to note that the thumri, as a song-form, had its heyday during the period of compact, intimate and informal *baithaks*. The singer would be inspired by the warmth of such intimate gatherings, comprising discerning listeners, who would understand and appreciate all the subtle nuances of a musical theme and encourage the artiste to give of his or her best. Where do we now have such *mehfils* or *baithaks* ?

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The Hindusthani Thumri & Its Parallel in Karnatak Music : Javali

S. A. K. Durga

In my paper I would like to focus only on the features which seem to be parallel in both Thumri of Hindusthani music and Javali of Karnatak Music. The parallel aspects which I propose to discuss in today's paper are :

1) the historical aspect
2) the text and melody
3) socialogical and cultural aspects.

First let me explain the term Javali. The word javali is traced to the Kannada term *Javadi* meaning a kind of lewd poetry. In Marathi, Javali refers to the gesture of the eyes in the language of Love (Kittel's Kannada - English Dictionary, 649 p.) It seems probable that since the form Javali is romantic in content of the text and has also evolved as a dance form in the style of *Lasya* bringing the meaning through *Abhinaya* or gestures where the eyes also play a very important role, the Marathi term might have been used to name the new form which evolved during Eighteenth century, first in Mysore. Mummadi Krishnaraya Wodeyar (1794-1868) is said to be the first known composer of Javali since biographical details of many Kannada Javali composers are not yet available. Then the Javalis in Telugu language which were / are still popular in South India are composed first by Dharmapuri Subbaroya Iyer in 1870. When this form evolved, the Maratha rule flourishing in the South and the Musicians from Maharashtra came to the South and the word, Javali in Marathi must have been familiar with the people of the South because of the influence of Maratha culture and Society. Therefore instead of having a regional perspective and assigning Javali with the Kannada term Javadi, it would be appropriate to have a national perspective and attribute the term Javali to Marathi word Javali.

Since I hold the same view as of Shri. Mohan Nadkarni that the Thumri form has developed from 18th Cent, I would like to state the Thumri of the North and the *Javali* of the South developed approximately at the same period. The founders, King Wajid Ali Shah of Lucknow and King Mummadi Krishnaraya Wodeyar of Mysore, were patrons of dance and music and both were not performing artists. This sociological factor that both the founders of Thumri and Javali were Kings is an interesting phenomenon which makes us to imagine the mental attitude of the kings who prefered entertainment value of the dance and music which would have induced them to create these semi-classical

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forms with romantic content as a dance genre which could be appreciated and enjoyed better when their court dancers performed at the palace, especially in the evening or night.

This is the first parallel concept which made me study further on these parallel factors between these two forms.

When we take up the historical tradition of Thumri and Javali, we find the common line of development from the time of Bharata. The origin for both Thumri and Javali can be traced back from the *Lasya* type of dances mentioned in Bharata's Natyasasthra. *Lasya* dance has been defined by Abhinavagupta in his Abhinavabharati as a solo dance for the song which contains the. *Sringara rasa. The song for* this Lasya dance is said to be Catushpadi having four lines of text which gives the message of love or conversation with the lover or complaints about the lover to her friend - *Sakhi.* The meaning of this composition is expressed through *Abhinaya* by the dancer using *padartha Abhinaya* and *Sanchari bhavas.*

During the post Bharata period, when the Uparupakas developed, the forms Srigadita and Nartanaka are solo dances carrying the *vipralambha Sringara* and the love message through *sakhi.*

Srigadita is the first of the *Uparupakas* which are mentioned by Abhinavagupta. This is a composition depicting love in seperation - *Vipralambha-featuring Kulangana,* a family woman along with her Sakhi, friend of hers. The Nayika describes the qualities of her lover and then complains about her lover to her friend that her beloved's attachment towards her has decreased. According to Bhoja, the Srigadita is the utterances of Sri or Goddess Lakshmi about her beloved Sri Vishnu or Narayana.

Nartanaka is another form of *Uparupaka* where the *Abhinaya* (gesture) is performed by the solo dancer for a composition which expresses romantic sentiment. Bhoja mentions three features for this Lasya dance : 1) the tempo is not fast 2) elegant movements of the eyes and 3) abhinaya of transitory moods of the *rasas.*

Kalidasa in his *Malavikagnimithra* portrays the character Malavika as a dancer and she performs *chalika* which is one of the forms used in *Nartakana* forms of *Uparupaka* according to *Bhoja.* The song is *chatuspadi* - consisting of four lines which depicts Purvanuraga - *Vipralambh,* or longing before the first union. The meaning of the verse is :

The songstress a young unmarried beautiful girl, is begging the love of the main listener, here a young royal person (Act, 2, Verse. 4.) Malavika expresses the meaning of the song through Abhinaya - From this *Chalika* form both Thumri and Javali seem to have originated or in other words, the origin for Thumri and Javali can be attributed to Chalika form which prevailed during

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King Bhoja's period but the fullfledged development of Thumri and Javali took place from the 18th Cent. The intermittent period might have had a few stray forms based on *Chalika* but its full-fledged development took place in the North in the form of Thumri and in the South in the form of Javali only from 18th Cent. The process and the development of Thumri and Javali as a dance genre and then becoming dance/music genre are again parallel developments which is an interesting factor in the evolution of the musical forms of India. Both are classified as Semi Classical forms. Why the term "semi classical" has been prescribed for these two forms ? It seems more probable because of their textual content. In Indian Music, the Classical musical forms have their textual content without the Romantic flavour and mainly concerned with Bhakti or devotional aspect. But in these two forms the name of the God occurs but with *Madhura Bhava.*

Here the question arises whether we would like to call Jayadeva's Gitagovinda as a Semi Classical form? It is recognised as a classical composition because even though it is written with *Madhura Bhava*, the work is performed in the temple music tradition whereas the Thumri and Javali are performed in the court and come under Court music tradition. The association of the temple makes the other form Classical whereas Thumri and Javali with the King's Court performance tradition makes them Semi-Classical or light classical. The term classical is fitted with Thumri and Javali because of their musical content. The music is of classical type and the text is light and therefore both Thumri and Javali are classified under Semi Classical or Light Classical Forms. Because of their textual material, both are classified under semi classical type of Indian Music and not because of their style of music. The *Ragabhava* in Thumri and Javalis in both is in abundance and the ragas used in them are within the specific lakshana prescribed for that particular raga and the raga-frame is not transgressed as we find in folk tunes. Therefore, the text more than music made them classify under light/or semi classical forms.

Javali is intended to contain the love message or pangs of seperation of the Nayika and this feature is found also in Thumris. The Ragas that are used in Javalis are *Rakti* Ragas and *Desya* ragas such as Kalyani, Mukhari, Purvikalyani Surati, Kannada, Saveri, Bilahari, Kedaragoula Senjurutti, Kamas and also Hindusthani Behag, Hindusthani Kafi, Yaman and Kannada. Parallel to this concept, we find in Thumris, Misra ragas and Suddha ragas are used, such as Peelu, Misra Khamaj, Misrapahadi and also ragas like Darbari kanada, Puryadhanasri.

The ragas chosen for Thumri and Javali forms are mostly evening ragas, night ragas and early morning ragas since the

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dance tradition of the court in the North and the South had the dance performance of the Nautch girls from evening till nearly morning for the entertainment of the kings.

The compositional format of both Thumri and Javali are of binary or Rondo types - with two sections, *Pallavi* and *Charanam* or *Sthayi* and *Antara* and sometimes with three sections *Pallavi, anupallavi* and *Charanam* or stays with two or more antaras. Since both Thumri as Javali developed and dance genre, the imrpovisional part on the performer is with the text and tune to heighten the *Sancharibhavas* portrayed by the dance. When these two forms are adopted also as musical genre, the singer follows the same tradition and gives prominence to sing the variations of the melody with the text. The importance is given to the exposition of the meaning of the text of the composition with emotions for which the medium of music is resorted to with Rasapoorita *sancharas* of the Ragas in both Thumri and Javali. Both Javali and Thumri must be performed with a vocal style which will enhance the emotional appeal of the text for which a flexible and melodious voice is necessary to sing these forms.

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Thumri, Dadra & Padam, Javali - A Comparative Note

Sakuntala Narasimhan

In this paper, I propose to dwell on the treatment of the Raga in Thumri and improvisation technique in the Hindustani style Thumri and some parallels in the Karnatak style in comparing the different forms of Hindustani and Carnatic music, a parallel is often drawn between the thumri and dadra of the north on the one hand and the padam and javali of the south on the other. To say that the two are corresponding sets in the two systems is, at best, true only in a very broad sense, in some ways the Carnatic padam resembles the thumri, and in other ways, it is javali that comes closer to the thumri.

Thumri, padam, and javali are all described as belonging to the light classical category and share certain common characteristics. One of these is the place of sahitya -- whereas, in the khayal and pallavi (of the north and south respectively) the emphasis is on technical virtuosity with the sparse lyrics used as pegs for a display of one's musical acumen,in the thumri, javali and padam the word content takes on added importance. The emphasis in all three is on matching the emotive content of the sahitya to that of the melody; in all three forms shringara bhava (the nayaka - nayika theme) predominates, either as eroticism, or as supplication to one's beloved, pangs of separation or the ecstacy of union.

In the face of these broad similarities, there are diferences too-the padams of carnatic music are scholarly compositions. They referred originally to any devotional composition (Purandaradasa padams, for example) but in today's musical parlance, padam refers to a particular type of composition which has shringara as its theme. "Although strictly a dance form, yet the *padam* is sung in concerts of art music on account of its musical excellence."(1)

The celebrated composer Kshetragna (17th century) is recognised as the Father of the Padam, and his compositions (in Telugu) are acclaimed as the quintessence of musical excellence and the finest representations of the raga swaroopa. They are mostly in slow tempo and in characteristic 7-beat cycles of Triputa tala. Though the lyrics of the padam seem erotic, there is said to be an underlay of philosophic content, with the longing of the individual soul (jeevatma) for union with godhead (paramatma) represented by the nayika and her beloved respectively. This kind of dual interpretation is not found in the case of the javali which is devoid of philosophical import. Javalis are 'lighter' than *padams* and sung mostly in faster tempo (although this is not a rigid rule

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-- there are javalis sung in slow speeds also -- remember: Sakhi prana in Janjhuti raga) Javalis are not considered 'heavy' enough to provide the quintessence of of the raga bhava, as in the case of the padam.

It will thus be seen that the thumri has features common with both padam and javali -- in the 'performed' sense, it would be perhaps appropriate to say that the padam and thumri seem closer (in terms of tempo, time measure) whereas lyrical content-wise, the javali is the more appropriate counterpart. (2)

Just as the padam is used in Bharatnatyam, the thumri is used in Kathak dance. The origins of the three forms - padam, javali and thumri - can be said to be roughly in the same time - frame of the post-medieval years (17th to 19th century). Although popular opinion holds that the thumri owes its development to Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, some musicologists believe that thumris were in existence before his time.(3)

Although there are different schools of thumri singing, in genereal the presentation follows a recognisable pattern -- establishment of the basic opening line, step-by-step elaboration through small and slow passages at first and through higher notes and faster phrases in the next stage, the second half of the lyrics (usually in the higher notes of the octave) with elaboration of this line again, and finally a switch-over to a faster pace and rhythm (of 4-4 beats, even when the thumri is set to a cycle of seven matras) in the finale. Improvisation throughout is with the lyrics, never in the form of wordless taans as in khayals. The splitting up of individual phrases has to take care of the syllables of the lyrics so as to avoid a mutilation of word-content in the pursuit of melodic excellence.

The treatment of the raga-ang shows certain similarities in approach in the three forms of thumri, padam and javali -- rakti or 'naya' ragas predominate; these are ragas capable of evoking melodicemotional moods appropriate to the agony or ecstacy of the lyrical content. Khammaj is a popular choice for thumris, likewise raga khamas has probably the largest number of javalis in the Carnatic style. (Illustration) Ragas like Kafi, Bhairavi, Jogiya Pilu and Tilang are among the other popular choices for thumris, and ragas like Kapi. Paraj and Saveri are used for padam-javli. In all the forms, grace, delicacy, sweetness and charm in the musical senses are paramount. Virility has no place, either in thumri or in padam-javali, - an aesthetics-oriented approach is what distinguishes these forms from other (classical) compositions.

Just as 7- and 8-beat cycles (Deepchandi, Punjabi) are the talas of choice for thumri, padams and javalis are also mostly in 7 or 8 beat talas (triputa and adi). Other parallels can be drawn -- these compositions are never preceded by alapanas (alap), nor is sargam *(kalpana swaras)* sung for them. The gait is either

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frisky or sedate, and complicated time-measures are not employed.

One interesting 'non-musical' parallel may be mentioned -- when the text of a collection of 199 padams by Kshetragna was brought out 70 years ago (1916). The publication is said to have carried a note of warning that it was " for private circulation only ". "This caution was necessary... because padams were not considered respectable, early this century."(4) Similarly, in the north " the exponents of this music style (thumris) were assigned a low social status until quite recently..."(5)

Thumri, padam and javali are all sometimes performed to 'madhyama sruthi', with the basic note shifted to madhyama, and this is very effective in highlighting the rakti-ang (particularly pathos) of certain ragas. (Illustration : Pahadi thumri-Javo vahin tuma, Elavach-chitive-Navroj padam.)

In most padams and in almost all thumris, Krishna is the hero. The *sahitya* describes either Radha or a gopi pining for Him, or some related episode addressed to the *sakhi*. In all these compositions, the *shringara* element can be highlighted through satire or humour, apart from straight eroticism. (Illustration : Thumri, Javo Vahin tuma shyam," and javali " Idi neeka mariyadga" have similar themes of taunting the lover.)

Given these points of similarities, one major difference between thumris and the south Indian counterpart is that while improvisation is essential in the former, such improvisation has no part in a padam or javali which are set pieces with fixed tunes. There is no counterpart in the Carnatic forms for the bol-banava of thumris. Treatment of the raga-ang in thumri is based on extempore delineation of the bhava (of the words as well as the music) but in padam-javali, the raga aspect is brought out by interpretative reproduction of the piece. However, even though in a padam improvisation has no place and the poetic meaning of the lyrics may often be lost because of the language barrier (Kshetragna padams are all in medieval Telugu, and the words are so widely spaced and split that the meaning could be obscured), the raga-ang is still so strong that it is able to carry the piece through a test of musical excellence. This could be because of the special temperament that a padam (or thumri) calls into play, an attunement and intuitive response to the emotive-melodic nuances in delivery not always called for by the khayal or other forms. Pedantic or academic virtuosity is not what a thumri or padam demands, but a dominance of romanticism and what are called 'verbal-tonal embellishments'. (Illustration - Sahana padam, bhairavi thumri)

The tunes set for padams by the vaggeyakkars are themselves so rich that the raga-ang is exploited to the full; the compositions are replete with *gamakas*, long phrases that call for breath control but codify the beauty of the raga, and exhaustive sancharas. The 'madhura bhava' implied in the raga-ang is brought out just as much in reproduction of set tunes in the padam as in extempore

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phrases as in the thumri. The raga-ang is also portrayed in its different shades by varying the tempo of the same raga to suit the mood of the lyrics, -- thus, different compositions in Khamas raga will be able to project different emotions by employing a slow tempo for lyrics full of pathos and a fast tempo for a *nayika* who scolds her lover or chides him for his behaviour. (Illustration -- javalis: Marulu konnadira and Kommarovaniki in Khamas).

One interesting point about ragas in thumri and javalis is that although these compositions are sung only in certain ragas that are capable of evoking moods and specific emotions, this does not preclude vakra ragas (example: Tilak Kamod, for thumri and Begada for javali). Ragas, in other words, do not have to be 'simple' in the conventional sense, in order to be able to evoke moods appropriate for thumris or padams.

It is interesting that padams and javalis of Carnatic music are also sung in some of the 'ghana' or classical ragas that are popularly chosen for delineation of kriti items -- there are padams in Kalyani, Sankarabharanam and Pantuvarali, whereas in Hindustani music a thumri is never set to the corresponding ragas of Eman, Bilawal and Puryadhanasri. (Illustration) Here again, the padam composition treats the musical element as pure music and exploits the raga-ang to the full, and the piece is enjoyed as a work of melodic excellence. (One opinion holds that the tunes now being sung may have been invented at a later date and may not be the original tunes which are lost in the absence of notation).

One of the reasons thumri is considered a light-classical item is that though a particular thumri may be in a specific raga, it is permitted to introduce extraneous notes (those deleted by the raga by definition) for the sake of musical effect. Such an introduction of alien notes is done consciously and deliberately but in a padam or javali, this licence cannot be taken and the raga is strictly adhered to. There are no 'misra Khammaj' or 'misra Kafi' in the Carnatic system.

Inspite of these differences, what is common to the three forms - thumri, padam and javali - is that their emphasis on eroticism and voluptuousness (and often earthy language) notwithstanding, they are all considered difficult to master; only the highly cultivated voice can do justice to these forms and perform them with competence. Ranjakta, and not rules or grammar, may be important, but still it is in these forms that the raga-ang is projected to its fullest and its aesthetic possibilities exploited to the maximum.

1. 'South Indian Music', Book 3, Prof. P.Sambamoorthy.
2. Dual interpratation is, however also known in some thumris -- e.g.,Babul mora, in Bhairavi.
3. Premlata Sharma, 'The history and origin of thumri, NCPA

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journal June 1973.

4. T.S.Parthasarathy, in "The riddle of Kshetragan - a fresh look."
5. Premlata Sharma, ibid.

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Thumri on Instruments

Arvind Parikh

Dhrupad To Khayal And Thimri : Over the years, Indian classical music has been expressed through many forms, evolved and developed in keeping with the social environment and level of cultural discipline that art forms were required to be subjected to. Dhrupad - the dignified, spiritual and in a sense, celestial form of music was evolved and nourished during a period in which music had a prime place in temples and artistes offered prayers in praise of Almighty. In the later period, Khayal form of music was performed in Courts of Kings and musicians vied with each other in praising and eulogising their patrons. Irrespective of the period when the Thumri form of singing was invented, it is commonly agreed that it became popular and highly patronised during the reign of Wajidali Shah - in Lucknow.

Purpose Of The Paper : The present paper is not expected to deal with the origin of Thumri form, nor is it designed to discuss various forms or types or Angs of Thumris - such as Purab, Punjab, etc. It is not even expected to cover various techniques employed by Thumri singers. The sole purpose of this presentation is to discuss various aspects of presenting Thumri on or through instruments: Whether Thumri can be played on instruments in its correct and complete dimensions - whether the presently played "instrumental Thumri" (if we call it so) can be in reality called authentic Thumri presentation.

Ingredients Of The Thumri : I shall try at the outset to analyse the ingredients of the Thumri form in musical terms and then endeavour to apply these norms or requirements to the instrumental Thumri.

Basically, any form of vocal music presentation is composed of three major elements viz - Swar - Laya/Taal and Sahitya. Thumri also naturally has these three ingredients. Some forms of Thumri called Abinayatmak thumri may contain a fourth element of the dance form - i.e. Abhinaya - It is self-evident that instrumental music can present or cover only two of these elements i.e., Swar and Laya/Taal. The question therefore is, whether a presentation devoid of Sahitya can be called Thumri? Let us seek to analyse this aspect a little more deeply and keenly.

Decreasing Importance Of Sahitya In Vocal Music Forms : Whilst Sahitya was of great significance and value in Dhrupad singing, we all agree that the wording or literary content of the Bandish in the Khayal form has lost its significance to a great extent. In some Gharanas, the Bandish has practically no value after the same has been sung once. It is the Swar - Vistaar or

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melodic unfoldment which has become primarily important. Inspite of this overwhelming treatment of the melodic content of the raag presentation, the Khayal remains a Khayal.

This Trend Applied To Thumri : Let us apply this dictum to Thumri singing. At the outset, it is relevant to analyse the varying significance of the use of Sahitya in different forms of light classical music. Thumri, Dadra, Ghazal and Qawali could be one division of light classical forms which have been influenced by Muslim culture and value priorities. It is interesting to assess the literary content and its importance in each of these forms - and then juxtapose the same with the differing melody content in each - Thumri relies heavily on melodic content and relatively - I emphasize relatively - less on Sahitya - when compared to Dadra style. Similarly Sahitya element becomes increasingly important when you consider Ghazal form of singing - and yet more important and significant in Qawali. On the other hand, the melodic content becomes less and less relevant - relativly speaking - as we proceed from Thumri to Dadra and on to Ghazal and Qawali. Hence when we compare these forms, the literary content becomes increasingly important, as we proceed from Thumri - Dadra - Ghazal and Qawali and conversely the use of melodic content becomes less and less relevant.

It should be noted that the rhythmic content has been used in keeping with the mood and laya or speed requirement of the presentation. Thus for Thumri, Taals which move in a languorous way and have an easy flow, are used, while Dadra, Ghazal rely more on heavy and marked tempo rhythms. Qawali of course relies very heavily on the strong rhythm taals and the entire mood and effect is to a great extent dependent on their heavy lilt.

We can safely say that Thumri is nearest to the Khayal form of singing - in terms of raag discipline and rhythmic inputs. On the other hand, liberty with the raag form is increasingly discernible in other forms like Dadra, Ghazal and Qawali as compared to Thumri. In fact, Thumri form relies in a great measure, on the raag structure and the description of Thumri is usually expressed as *Desh - ki - Thumri* or *Khamaj - ki - Thumri* or *Bhairavi - ki - Thumri* or *Pilu - ki - Thumri*, etc., etc.

We have now noted that Khayal form or Thumri form do cover in their respective folds, the element of Sahitya - but not in a manner that it becomes an inseparable or inevitable part.

Treatment of Melodic And Rhythmic Content In Thumri : Thus if we present Thumri on instruments, in my personal opinion, there is no impairing or prejudicing its intrinsic values and discipline, if care is taken to ensure that melody and rhythm elements are correctly and adequately presented. (May be, one can argue that it would be difficult to present a Ghazal or Dadra on instruments as they rely predominantly on the Sahitya element). A few words therefore, regarding each of these elements may be relevant

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to establish, that it is quite possible to present these two disciplines through instruments if the player takes the required care and has the requisite knowledge as well as the temperament of Thumri form.

Melody : If we divide the melodic content of Thumri singing into two major sections i.e. matter and manner, it would easily be understood that each has its own system of unfoldment and technique. As the development of a melody in Thumri only loosely follows a raag pattern, the Thumri singer has greater freedom to unfold it without worrying too much about the rigid discipline and grammar of the raag structure. The rules of Badhat can be followed more in terms of phrase development rather than individual note development. Again it is the mood of the presentation that dictates the treatment of melodic phrases and their position in the scale. The matter projected therefore will be dictated by the imagination and skill of the musician.

The manner of treatment of the notes in Thumri as compared to the classical forms like Khayal, is more ornamental and angular - using several phrases with Kana-treatment. And no wonder the form is called light classical - the treatment being lighter, at the same time retaining its classical base. Thus Thumri form lends itself to a lighter treatment, giving a greater freedom to the musician both in terms of the raag discipline as well as the treatment of and attitude towards musical notes.

Rhythm : Rhythms have their own special importance in the light classical forms, as already stated earlier. Every Thumri composition is set to a particular rhythm - keeping in view the required tempo, time cycle and emphasis. I would like to dwell on this aspect briefly as the Thekas used in Thumri are well-known and in fact, surprisingly established and standardised. It is in the realm of Dadra and more so in Ghazal singing that confusion and cheapening has come about in recent times. In fact, many include Dadra form in the more generous forms of Thumri - thereby avoiding display of ignorance and resultant allegations of the knowledgeables. As far as Ghazal is concerned, what we hear more often these days is Ghazal in Geet style.

If, therefore, the instrumentalist is adequately trained and equipped, he can certainly play Thumri using the melody and rhythm, studiously conforming to the rules and norms as prescribed. It is true that Sahitya element would be wanting, but can we say that if melodic and rhythmic elements are properly expounded, this shortcoming could be indiscernible and perhaps dispensable? If a Thumri Khamaj or Pilu is played on an instrument with proper treatment of melody, meticulously accompanied by the Taal used in Thumri singing, it would certainly be as enjoyable as when sung. Maybe, if the player bases his basic Mukhada, to follow a very well known Bandish - the listeners could even visualise the words as if they are sung.

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Thumri & Dhun : We can easily now realise why Thumri when played on instruments is often called a "Dhun". In my opinion, it is sometimes deliberate recasting of the melodic and more importantly, the rhythmic element that converts Thumri into Dhun. In fact, the elements and shades of different forms of light classical music are mixed up. Taals with heavy accent and "easy to follow" lilt etc., are usually used by instrumentalists these days, when playing a lighter piece, after a heavy raag. I firmly believe that if the Thumri discipline of melody and Rhythm is properly and fully followed, a Thumri presentation on instruments would certainly remain Thumri and not a Dhun. I have therefore stated that it is a deliberate change that instrumentalists have brought about, knowingly and in keeping with the public requirements.

In this presentation, I have tried to outline relative importance and changing significance of the element of Sahitya in classical as well as light classical forms. Later it has been emphasized that if other qualifying disciplines of melody and rhythm are scrupulously followed, an instrumentalist can also present the Thumri form effectively.

It cannot be denied that the effectiveness of music is best achieved through vocal music - we do say that Gana is Uttam, Bhajana is Madhyam etc. This dictum equally applies to Thumri - but then the instrumental Thumri is only less effective and not ineffective. Thumri in its pure form can be presented on instruments.

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The Influence of Thumri on Rabindra Sangit

Sitansu Ray

Like all other styles of music, that of thumri has been perennially evolving as a performing art. So, we may assume that the thumri as we listen to now was not the same during Rabindranath Tagore's life-span (1861-1941). It was much more simple than its present-day super-structure of extempore improvisation, elaboration and intricate embellishments.

Yet, the influence of thumri on Rabindra Sangit is a topic of minor importance. Tagore was deeply influenced by dhrupad first. Next to dhrupad, he was also more or less influenced by the compositions (bandishes) of Kheyal and tappa. Thumri influenced him a little; and to a researcher, that influence is not quite negligible. Whatever be the classical or light-classical forms, Tagore utilized just their basic forms and primordial ethos; and he had nothing to do with the rhythmic multiplications of dhrupad, elaborations and swift tans of kheyal and tappa, and the rhythmic and percussive forces of the concluding portion of the thumri.

After all, Tagore-songs are aesthetic fusions of the lyric and music. So, the concerned Hindustani style is not an end but only a means to the over-all art of a Tagore-song. When one sings a Tagore-song, he does not aim at singing a dhrupad, or kheyal, or tappa or thumri. On the whole, Tagore-songs or the Rabindra-Sangit as a class gradually acquired a unique style, and that is why any piece of Rabindra Sangit is easily recognised by virtue of its diction, note-combination, its well-planned and well regulated embellishments and touching glides etc. So, those Tagore-songs which bear the influence of thumri, retain their Tagorean characteristics first.

Formerly, thumri was the name of a particular four-beat or eight-beat rhythm, somewhat similar to Kaharba or eight-beat yat. The rhythm thumri was very popular in the thumri songs. Of course there were various rhythmic patterns of thumri songs such as six-beat, seven-beat, fourteen-beat and sixteen-beat patterns. All such patterns are found in the realm of Rabindra Sangit. Relevant examples will be demonstrated.

As the tonal structure of thumri need not stick to a particular raga, the tunes of Tagore-songs also incorporate more than one similar ragas. Originally thumri was associated with the graceful pacings of expressive dancing. Tagore songs are to some extent similar to this. A good number of Tagore songs can be rendered with the accompaniment of dancing. Excellent love-songs are there both in thumri and Tagore-songs. Some devotional and spiritual Tagore-songs are also there sounding like that of thumri structure. The ragas used by Tagore in his thumri-like composi-

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tion are more or less kaphi, pilu, baroyan, khambaj, desh, parajv-asanta, kalingda and bhairavi etc.

Now, let us come to some select examples :-

First of all, we may demonstrate and listen to some dadra-type Tagore-songs with intricate blend of lyrico-musical appeal and the essence of dadra variation of thumri :-

(1) Ogo amar shravan-megher kheya-tarir majhi- (kaphi, dadra.) One may compare it with Kajri. Both a kajri and the above-mentioned song are sung in the setting of the rainy season.

(2) Tumi epar opar karo ke go ogo kheyar neye - kaphi, dadra. It is devotional song.

(3) Ogo swapna-swarupini-paraj-vasanta. This is one of the fine love-songs of Tagore.

(4) Eto phul ke photale - Kalingda, dadra.

(5) O keno bhalobasa - pilu, khemta.

(6) O je mane na mana - bhairavi, dadra.

Now, let us come to four, eight and sixteen-beat patterns :-

(7) Chhaya ghanaiche bane bane - pilu, kaharva. This also can be compared to a kajri-type thumri. This is one more song of the rainy season.

(8) Sakhi oi bujhi banshi baje - pilu-baroyan, kaharva. The song bears a metaphorical imagery of Sri Radha's emotional longing for Sri Krishna, playing his flute.

(9) Rup-sagare dub diyechhi - Khambaj, yat. This is a song from the devotional category.

(10) Amara e ghare - desh, trital.

(11) Aji yata tara taba akashe - Lum-khambaj, kawali.

Let us survey some other rhythmic variations, as for example, seven and fourteen-beat patterns :-

(12) Ogo Kishora aji tomara dware - mixed kaphi, and its percussion may be done in rupak, dipchandi or dhamar. Both its thematic content and execution sound like that of hori thumri. It is sung during the spring festival.

(13) Tora shunis ni ki - sindhu-baroyan, yat (14-beat) or dipchandi.

(14) Keno bajao kankana - Kafi, rupak.

Some Tagore-songs seem to be on the border line between tappa and thumri. Some such examples are furnished below :-

(15) Pipasa hay nahi mitilo - bhairavi

(16) Bandhu raho raho sathe - bhairavi

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(17) Era parke apana kare - pilu

(18) dina yay re dina yay - pilu

Tagore did not bother about the rhythmic cycle of some such songs. These are often sung in the fashion of free verse without any percussive accompaniment. More such songs are :-

(19) Kakhan dile paraye swapane - pilu

(20) Khelar sathi biday-dwar kholo - pilu
This is a song of parting from one's beloved.

(21) Tumi kichhu diye yao - mixed khambaj

(22) Sakhi andhare ekela ghare - mixed khambaj

Though such songs are of free-rhythm character, singers and artistes may set them to suitable tala and sing them with rhythmic accompaniment. Of course, they must be careful about the Tagorean style of rendition which must not be damaged.

Let me conclude my paper with a twelve-beat tala, divided into four divisions consisting of three beats. This is a kind of ektal, prevalent in Bengal.

(23) Yadi prem dile na prane - kaphi, ektal

I must say that my list is not exhaustive. There is ample scope of re-investigation in the vast realm of Tagore music in the perspective of Indian music as a whole.

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Girija Shankar's Contribution To Thumri

Alok Kumar Chattopadhya

Thumri is a particular style of singing largely within the format of the presentation of Hindusthani classical songs. However, this type of singing, although occasionally based on classical ragas, does not conform to the rigidity of their specific forms. It frequently bursts out of the confines of exacting outlines of the form of a raga to chart its own course guided by the imagination of the singer. The key tenet of the Thumri style, being shringara or love, tends to be richly colourful. Depending on the genius of the artiste, the Thumri can convey the different poles of love - the joy emanating from the much-cherished union of two hearts or their falling apart with the sorrow of non-fulfilment.

Over the ages, many Thumri maestros left the mark of their own distinctive styles on the mode of presentation leading to its enrichment. Shri Girija Shankar Chakravarty was one such memorable performer, whose popularity has outlived his death. Girija Shankar, besides being an outstanding artiste in Thumri, was none-the-less known for his competence in teaching. The galaxy of later day brilliant performers of Thumri like A.T.Kanan, Jnan Prakash Ghosh, Dr. Jamini Ganguly, Sukhendu Goswami and Tarapada Chakravarty, each of whom has carved out a niche in the mind of Thumri connoisseurs, speaks out amply of the success of Girija Shankar as a teacher.

Girija Shankar was born at Baharampur in Murshidabad district of Bengal in 1885, that is more than a hundred years ago. His father Bhabani Chakravarty was a well-known lawyer. Even as a child, Girija Shankar's propensity to fine arts-his first love was painting - was noticed. An appreciative father sent the boy to Government school of Art in Calcutta where he studied painting for some time. Although destiny charted a different course for him, yet his painting lessons eventually stood him in good stead largely improving his ability to infuse a pictorial quality in his presentation of Thumri with delicate variations in tonal colours.

Girija Shankar's apprenticeship in the world of Hindusthani classical music began with two of the oldest forms, the Dhrupad and Dhamar. His first guru was the legendary Radhika Prasad Goswami. Later, he systematically learnt Khayal and Tappa from the masters of the by-gone era like Ustad Muzaffar Hussein, Ustad Uzir Khan and of course, the colossus of those days, Ustad Badal Khan.

Later, he, however, became enamoured with Thumri after hearing performances of Ustad Mouzuddin, a prodigious talent

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who died very early, and Bhaya Saheb Ganapat Rao, another noted figure of the old world music. These two found an avid learner in Girija Shankar.

Girija Shankar became famous, popular and came in the top list of the music circle specially for his thumri reeitle. He popularised Khayal and Thumri in the music loving circle of Bengal. He built several institutions of music here and there in Bengal. His system of training and style of singing are going on now-a-days in Bengal to a considerable extent.

Girija Shankar, in his style of performance in Thumri mainly adhered to Puravanga. This anga is as like as the style of singing Khayal. He used to sing traditional compositions in the unique style of his own. Girija Shankar breathed his last in 1948 leaving behind some artistes and teachers of repute. Gnan Prakash Ghosh and Jamini Ganguly, two of my masters, got their training from Girija Shankar.

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On Thumri Taleem

Anita Sen

Taleem is a very popular and common word, aiming at systematic style of teaching. What the classical musicians understand by taleem, is the long processed way to absorb the qualities as well as the style of Guru, by following a particular pattern of singing and acquiring the personality of his Guru by sincere efforts and dedication.

The Word Taleem : By expressing the learning of music as Taleem, one immediately differentiates the word Taleem from teaching. Teaching or learning of Khayal or Thumri or Dhrupad aims at the lessons given by a teacher to his taught. This teaching or learning does not aim at a particular style of singing or playing an instrument which imprints the image of the teacher. It is just the knowledge regarding music which is imparted to a pupil to make him know what music is and how to reproduce a bandish or improvise the Alaps, Tans or Gayaki.

Taleem is a very significant word, a God blessed term which immediately aims at a particular style of singing or playing an instrument.

The word Taleem has its own significance, it means the transfer of knowledge from a Guru to a Shishya in such a manner that the typical style followed or acquired by the Guru is as it is, transferred to the shishya in a very systematic way. The shishya absorbs the lessons, the style, the knowledge and the judgment power. Then after the Guru is satisfied and is ready to certify the completion of Taleem, the Guru then sanctions the shishya or permits him to improvise his own talent and genius. The shishya then adds to his performance whatever improvisations he can do and add to the colour.

Here Taleem has its own language. The importance of taleem is that after adding as many improvisations as the student can do, the typical intonation, emotion, expression, meaningfulness and ascents and descents remain the same. The language of Taleem once being established in the minds of the shishya starts flourishing and stabilising.

Taleem of any knowledge whether music or fine-arts or arts or science has the same significance. Indian classical music is individualistic by nature. It means that every individual musician while performing puts his own skill and imagination intermingled with whatever he has learnt during his taleem. if a guru imparts taleem to 4 to 5 students, contributes to produce 4 to 5 independent artists. In simple words the classical Indian music performance cannot be through group singing. It is always individual. You may

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well quote some duet singers or players like Rajan-Sajan or Singh brothers. They are two individual artists clipped together. They express their individuality while singing. It is only the balance of gayaki rendered by them during the performance that builds a bright due finish and enriches the commercial technique of presentation.

So taleem in Indian Music produces individual artists. There are many styles of singing. The important amongst them, are Khayal, Dhrupad and Thumri, Dadra.

Thumri gayaki is a style of singing which carries literature and music at par. The lyric or the poetry woven with soft and melodius tune creates a new atmosphere. The poetry in a Thumri is emphasized and said in tune. The vetaran musicians pronounce it as Kahan Shaili (declematory style). As for example, the word, shyam is sung in many ways, each time giving a new colour to the word Shyam.

The Kahan Shaili has established it self through ages. A group of singers, specially lady-singers acquired this style of singing i.e. thumri and centred their singing on elaborating and improvising the bandish of the thumri in as many ways as they could. That made them establish themselves as thumri singers and make name. The Kahan Shaili thus found its footing with many varieties of elaboration. The listeners started enjoying and started expecting more varieties.

That is how Khana, pukar, murak, zizak, maan-abhiman, etc. all emotional expressions were personified. Pukar in thumri Gayaki, touches the hearts of the listeners. The theme of the bandish of thumri mainly based on Sringara Rasa, thus got a new life, new shape and new prestige.

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Sociology of Thumri

Vinayak Purohit

I.FUNDAMENTAL DICHOTOMY

There is a fundamental dichotomy that afflicts our arts. On the one hand, the visual and the literary arts have been more or less modernised, i.e. bourgeoisfied. On the other hand, the performing arts, especially music and dance, have retained their medievality, i.e. their feudal character.(1) The reasons for this strange phenomenon are sociological and historical.

Whilst British imperialism imposed a capitalist path of development upon India, only an elite minority was permitted to modernise itself by sharing the imperial loot and by raising effective demand for the output of the visual and literary arts.

Only the upper stratum could build new style homes, decorate them with the latest fashionable statuary, paintings and bric-a-brac. Education remained a monopoly of the middle classes and books and periodicals could be consumed exclusively by them.

The mass of the people were the victims of forced underdevelopment. The country as a whole was deindustrialised, ruralised and pauperised. Between 1911 and 1921, the average expectation of life at birth hovered around 20. The rate of illiteracy was over 86 per cent when the British left India in 1947.(2) The poor in India could not commission architects to build their huts, nor could they decorate them with expensive sculptures and exquisite paintings, nor could they read or buy literary masterpieces.

At the same time, the ruling classes of both whites and browns, had to exercise ideological sway over the people at large, hypnotise, cajole, browbeat, entice, entertain, overawe, titillate, and in every conceivable manner; influence the mass mind, so that the oppressed and the exploited did not revolt and were brainwashed into an acceptance of the status quo. Therefore, the new masters of the Indian people had to leave the well-established long-functioning communication channels of the performing arts open. Thus was born the medieval modernity of Indian Music.

II. SPECULATIVE SPIRITUALITY

We have an inveterate proclivity for archaising, irrationalising and spiritualising.(3)

Not so long ago, in the prestigious mouthpiece of the Sangeet Natak Akademi, a scholar claimed simultaneously :(4)

1. that styles resembling the thumri must have been in vogue

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from times immemorial;

2. that the thumri is an example of the perpetual musical urge in human nature;

3. that though the most widely current theory attributed the original of the thumri to Wajid Ali Shah's Avadh court of mid-nineteenth century, all causal theories of historical problems are partial and superficial and fail to take cognizance of the inner homogenous continuity of human affairs;

4. that unlike other societies, Indian society has had such a strong spiritual base that it has rejected influences of a political or exotic kind and that fundamental concepts of Indian art are derived from the very soul of the Indian people;

5. that the fundamental theory of Indian classical music, including thumri, as indeed of all Indian art and poetry, is rooted in the theory of nadabrahaman or shabdabrahman and is linked with the Vedic religion;

6. that Bharata's Natyashastra is based on Vedic concepts and is the Bible of all branches of Indian art and peotics and

7. that thumri is an ephemeral evolute or a variant out of a long series of forms beginning with the Dhruva of Bharata's Natyshasta.

It is not necessary to refute such speculative theology which makes the thumri hark back to times immemorial, and which denies causality itself to history. No one has as yet discovered the special Indian organ for reception of nada or shabdabramha. And Indian soul, Indian spirituality, etc. being presumably stable formations, have nevertheless operated rather spasmodically since a long series of forms evolved out of the dhruva of Natyashastra, of which series the thumri is the latest ephemeral evolute. If the very soul of the Indian people had been hankering after thumri from times immemorial and had already gestated analogous forms from the days of Manu, then how did thumri become the ephemeral evolved end-product emergent out of Bharata's dhruva?

I suggest that we abandon such nonsensical mythologising of thumri and straightaway accept the reasonable and rational evidence of history.

III. FEUDAL COLLAPSE

Let us take a quick conspectus. During the reign of Muhammad Shah(1719-48), the Mughal empire began to crumble and the last severe crisis of the Indian feudal system was upon it. This was the phase of bandit feudalism in India. Rival armies of mercenaries and irregulars owing allegiance to various sub-

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ederas and vassals were at each other's throats, egged on by the local agents of the French and the English East India Companies. Dupleix and Clive were able to hire local forces and pit them against each other. The Seven Years War (1756-63) settled the issue in favour of the English, but the Marathas, operating severally (the Sindhias, the Holkars, the Gaikwads, the Nagpur Bhonsales, the Satara Bhonsales and the peshwas) and jointly, the Sikhs, the Nepalese, the Hyderabad Nizamshahis, the Hyder-Tipu forces and several more, nevertheless remained in contention till the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

Such convulsive happenings were bound to have their impact on the arts. In our opinion, it is entirely reasonable to suppose that the beginning of this disintegrative process, from the last days of Aurangzeb's long reign (d. 1707), was marked by the powerful propagation of the Khayal Gayaki, by Sadarang-Adarang in and around Muhammad Shah's court. The end of the same process of breakdown was marked by the defeat of the Indians in the Third Maratha War (1818) and the annexation of Avadh (1856), as well as by the forceful rise of thumri gayaki.

IV. SEX AND SOCIETY

Each social formation has its own mode of prostitution. The Greeks had the cheap dikteriades and the expensive hetairai, the Japanese the various grades of geishas, and the Indians the ganikas, the *veshyas* and other sorts of *roopjivinis*.

During the process of feudal disintegration, a vast social transformation occurred and prostitutes felt the impact just as much as other sections of society. The Kothewalis became, first deredars, and still later, denizens of the red light quarters of the new port-towns and cantonments.

The old Kothewalis, or holders of estates with houses (kothis), had been settled on them by their princely patrons. The Kothewalis lived in style and boasted of their talents and pedigrees just as much as any other feudalist. With dimunition of the princely purses, they became unsettled and ran helter skelter for succour. In fact, they became deredars, or holders of tents, which they pitched at likely places of troop concentrations. In the meantime, the new port-towns of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay were growing up, and offered opportunities that no longer sufficed around the crumbling old places and temples, mandis and *karkhanas*. The port-towns and British cantonments were teeming with foreign sailors and soldiers, as well as with the riff-raff and lumpens gathered from all over the country. Prices had fallen and the ugliness of the flesh trade could no longer be hidden in subtleties, courtesies and proprieties. But a buck could be made even though crudely. Naturally, the madams owning the bazar sex shops exploited the poor girls mercilessly, but no more than the kulak, the landless labourer, or the millowner, the child wage-earner.

There were other sexual aberrations too. The vaishnav mahan-

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tas exercised the right of jus primae nocties or droit du seigneur over the newly wedded wives of their followers. A militarist culture had prevailed since the rise of the Delhi Sultanate in the thirteenth century. The enforced prolonged stay in encampments far away from home had its inevitable consequences of promotion of homosexuality and beastiality. Portly Wajid Ali Shah is authentically reported to have dressed as gopi and danced in the manner of the hermaphrodite. This should not appear absurd or offensive to the intellectual admirers of ancient Graeco-Roman civilisation or of modern Gay Rights Movements.

The days of the staid, slow-moving, ponderous, obsequious and devotional dhrupad dhamar gayaki were long past. This gayaki may have its heyday from the time of Mansingh Tomar (1486-1577) to the end years of Aurangazeb (1658-1707) and Muhamed Shah (1719-48).

Even the ebullient, fast-moving, scintillating, idiosyncratic and multi-faceted khayal gayaki was not suited to the new environment of the *deredar* singer and the sex-shop *mujrawali*. What was needed was a frentic, shocking, highly erotic, completely eclectic, quick-fire, explosive, enticing potpourri, which would swiftly captivate the client. Kathak dancing, thumri singing and gujarati-Urdu-Parsi drama were all devised to meet the needs of these times.

The Thumri itself was :

"....the main characteristics of the thumri are latitude in elaboration of the ragas, a predominance of the amorous sentiment in songs; greater emphasis on verbal-tonal embellishments rather than on purely tonal ones; a preference for the feminine voice.

"....The thumri may be rated lower in the scale of standards of orthodox classical music, but it has an important place in our social life..."(5)

The thumri assumed two structural forms and was classified as khadi or baithi, depending on whether the singing accompanied a dance by a younger nautch girl who performed standing up and whirling about, or by a middle aged and faded prima donna who remained seated and merely moved her hands, torso and facial features to express and punctuate the erotic show put up to captivate her aged clientele.

Parallel with the feudal system of thikanas of miniature paintings, the banis of dhrupad-dhamar gayaki and the gharanas of khayal gayaki, thumri also had its own gharanas, like Jaipur and Lucknow, corresponding to gharanas of kathak dancing. Gradually, many more such thumri gharanas sprang up, e.g. at Varanasi, Delhi, Calcutta-Bengal, Bhopal, Hyderabad-Andhram Bombay--Bhendibazar (also known as Moradabadi gharana) and other similar centres.

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Two clarifications may be briefly stated at this stage of our sociological analysis.

Footnotes

1) For detailed analysis and discussion, see Vinayak Purohit, Arts of Transitional India : 20th Century, 1986, in particular Ch.4 "What is Modern Indian Art? and Ch.6, "The Medieval Modernity of Indian Music."

2) The Gazetteer of India, Vol.4, 1978,P.471 and India 1985, A Reference Annual, 1986, P.17.

3) A classical example is provided by Dr. Premlata Sharma's contribution to the special number of thumri, Sangeet Natak organ of the Sangeet Natak Akadmi.

4) Dr. Sharma, op.cit., pp.1, 2, 6, 8, etc.

5) Premlata Sharma op.cit., p.8.

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Thumri - Accepted Notions & New Trends - With Reference to Smt. Shobha Gurtu's Style

Sarala Bhide

Any musical form originates from definite aesthetic principle. New forms originate if the forms already in vogue are found insufficient for expression. The demands of time and social atmosphere change the mode of expression.

Various musical forms we see today, seem to be formed according to this principle. Sometimes the old forms are modified instead of the creation of a new form. Singing the mantras of Rigveda in tune - i.e. Samveda - is the oldest form. After that followed the Jatis and Prabandhas. Dhrupad with different singing styles (Banis) had strict disciplines and hence the Khyal aspired to have freedom from these rules forming a new musical form.

A musical form similar to the lyrical Thumri has been mentioned in the old text. (Rang-rag-prasadini Dhruva in Bharat's Natyashashtra). But to-day's Thumri seems to have originated some 150 years ago. The meaning of the word Thumri is well known and the Thumri songs were most probably composed for the accompaniment of "Kathak" dance. Evidently, this Thumri singing was subordinate to the acting and dancing in Kathak, naturally, because here the Thumri helped the emotional expression in dance. These Thumris were composed mainly in Teental or fast Deepchandi (Jat) and so compact that these deserve the title *Bandish Ki* or *Bol-Bant Ki Thumri.*

This Bol-Bant (dividing the words) proves to be helpful in the expression of subtle emotions in dance when performed singing the same line again and again in one cycle with some variations in the word patterns. The same technique is used while presenting Chota Khyal also. But anyway, the Tal-Pattern (figure) is not very conductive to free elaboration or expression of emotions.

This seems to be the main reason why the Bol-Banav Thumri (which is the real "Singing Thumri") came into being. Here, we also have a variety called *Ada-Ki Thumri* where the word-meaning is expressed through note-patterns as well as facial expressions. Mainly the Ada-Ki thumri is performed by the specific female artists and therefore associated with loud acting and vulgar facial and vocal expressions. Therefore, this *Ada-Ki Thumri* is not considered very pure or of high level as far as Pure Music is concerned. Bol-Banav Ki Thumri is modified in such a way that the note-patterns, word patterns and musical expression get more importance than the Ada.

Accepted Characteristic Features Of The Bol-Bananv Thumri

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1) The musical effect of this Thumri is far more dependent on its poetic content than in the case of orthodox Rag-Sangeet - i.e. Khyal.

2) The poetic theme of songs deals most often with Shringar - Ras expressing separation from the beloved or the re-union with him. Sometimes it has a dual significance - spiritual & mundane. (e.g. *Babul more naihar Chhooto jaay; Sunder mori maikeme mail bhayi)*

Some of the Vaishnav temple songs are used as Thumri as they possess the

[e.g. Jabase shyam sidhare] **Virah** *shringaar*

3) Thumri is a lyrical and romantic form : This is due to the restricted range of Ragas suitable for its rendering and the fact that the expression in the song is considered more important than the Rag-rules. Ragas Khamaj, Desh, Kafi, Pilu, Bhairavi, Mand etc. are considered suitable for this purpose.

4) It requires a special quality of voice, natural or cultivated, for its proper rendering. According to Sharngdeva, a natural female voice possesses these qualities : *madhura, snehala, komala, karuna, snigdha,* and *raktiman.* It is said that females are better equipped to sing Thumri. In practice, though, many male singers who sang Dhamar - Hori in Dhrupad style also sang Thumris with grace. Similarly Kathak dancers doing Ada used to ssing very good Thumris.

5) The Talas specially meant for singing Thumris are - Deepchandi, Pashto, Chachar & Addha etc. The Talas like Jhoomra, Tilwada or Choutal, ultal are not used for Thumris.

6) The elaboration and expression of emotion is always Verbal - tonal - meaning various musical phrases along with appropriate Bol patterns. The alaps are never purely tonal ones. The devices used for beautification of the Bol and note patterns are *Jhatka, khatak, gitakri, meend, dard,* and *pukar* ;- subtle graces with modulation of voice.

7) *"Sur se, bol se, baat se baat paida honi chahiye"* - The voice modulation (svara - kaku) the expressive pronunciation of the words (shabda - kaku/phenkane) and aesthetic sense of the artist - these are the really important graces of this style.

8) The "Stobhakshara-s" syllables of exclamations-are added for effect : e.g. *haan, haay, haay, ho Rama, are haan re,* etc.

Of course, these characteristic features make the outer frame-work of the Thumri. Thumri comes alive when the artist with his inner inspiration and soulful expression presents it giving proper

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justice to the creative side & the technical side.

Thumri form underwent change and modification within last 150 years and the process is still going on. Similarly, Khayal form also seems to be changing quite a lot and on the other hand, Gazal has become an immensely popular form satisfying the need of a word - oriented elaboration. Therefore, the Thumri in the old style has become unfit for todays musical environments in a way. Smt. Shobha Gurtu, the popular Thumri Queen, presents a newly coloured Thumri giving it a modern touch according to the need of the time.

"What are the modifications and modern touches in the old Thumri ?" I shall present my own view point for the reader's thoughtful consideration.

Smt. Shobha Gurtu's Thumri presentations is the final product of her musical background and her aesthetic sense etc. Shobhaji's mother Smt. Menakabai Shirodkar was a famous Ada-Ki Thumri singer and dancer of her time. She [Menakabai] learned dance from Shamlalji from Bikaner and Ada from Biharilalji of Benaras. Shobhaji in her childhood had seen her mother singing and dancing. Menakabai arranged for Shobhaji to learn Ada from Mannalalji, though she was not inclined towards dancing. Instead Shobhaji learned the intricate Jaipur style by just listening while her mother took lessons from Bhurji Khansahib. He was very pleased with this young girl because she successfully imitated very intricate taan passages without any difficulty.

Shobhaji learned from Ghamman Khansahib the intricacies of Thumri. Though Ghamman Khan was a Tabla player by profession he had listened to the famous Moujuddin Khan, and learned from Bashir Khan. Ghamman Khan taught Shobhaji with harmonium in his hands and explained the subtle rhythm & the intrinsic tal in the Thumri elaboration.

The style and voice of Begum Akhtar attracted Shobhaji very much and she tried to imitate Begum Sahiba by listening to her gramophone records and imbibing the soulful tunefulness with Dard (pathos) in her voice. Shobhaji seems to be impressed by the simple forceful voice projection (though without undue embellishments and graces) of Begum Sahiba. The veteran singer Smt. Anjanibai Malpekar also taught Shobhaji a little.

On this background, let us see the different aspects of Shobhaji's Thumri.

1) The tempo of her Thumri is slower than the old style, thus making the rendering more dignified and duration of one cycle *(advartana)* elongated. Shobhaji successfully met with this challenge of filling in this long time meaningfully and attractively with the support of her intrinsic tunefulnes and tactful Boï-Banav.

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2). The natural effect of the training in the Rag - Sangit, being the fluency in the mixing up of similar Ragas to enhance the expression and variety in the elaboration.

3) Another by-product of her Khyal training is, that she has composed many of her own Thumris and Dadras in the Ragas rarely used for Thumris. (e.g. *aaja re aaja re meet piyarava* in Bibhas, Lalit, Bhatiyar, etc, *more ghar aay re balalava* in Janasammohini, *ho sajana baat niharat* in Madmad Sarang, etc.)

4) Inspired, spontaneous expression along with the voice modulations (specially 'dard') and her sensitivity as an artist are the main points of her attractive style.

5) Shobhaji can achieve a rapport with the audience with her alertness and facial expressions.

6) Her style is her own - not imitation of anybody, - this is a special feature of any creative artist.

7) In the Thumri form, Shobhaji offers very delicate and subtle embellishments as well as the basic concrete & dignified framework This, combined with restraint in the presentation makes Shobhaji's Gayaki unique.

It seems that due to all these features the Thumri form is being modified a bit and it will serve the purpose of achieving balance between the Khyal and the Gazal.

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Folk Elements in Thumri

Sushila Pohankar

There are two streams of music viz. (1) Marga Sangeet and (2) Deshi Sangeet. Marga Sangeet was used by a particular class of singers i.e. the intelligent, scholar class at religious ceremonies or for prayer. It was used by the sages to attain salvation. Deshi Sangeet is used on social functions to entertain people. It is the music of masses and not of a particular class.

Deshi Sangeet is defined as "Deshe Deshe Janynam Yadruchya Hridaya ran jakam". It means that music is flexible and changes according to the tastes of the people in different parts of the country. It would not be wrong to say that Deshi Sangeet has its origin in folk music.

Folk means common man and folk music is the music of the common man, which is born and brought-up in the villages. Villagers are closely related to nature. The rustic beauty of nature, the animals, the flow of rivers and rural culture, can be envisaged in the folk songs. Folk music is an inseparable part of Indian culture.

It is a form of expression with great ease. The feelings of romance, separation, love and different relations in the family such as those of the in-laws, their life styles, their traditions - every detail of the life of common folk is seen in the folk songs. Folksongs collectively belong to a community and is a form of expression in which every member of the community participates. These songs are sung by the rural folk in the month of 'Sawan', in the month of 'Fagun' i.e. during the Holi festival and at religious and social ceremonies and festivals (including sanskar-geet).

Folk music is spontaneous and sung without any inhibitions. Since folk music is common man's music, the lyrics are also based on commonly used dilects. There are very few words (lyrics), the songs are relatively short and limited notes are used. The lyrics used are based on colloquical language and is not highly literary nor does it have music of very high standards. While singing, the lyrics are spontaneously added and the tunes are also spontaneously altered. Neither the songs nor the tunes are written down. This tradition is passed on orally from person to person and generations to generations and is alive even today.

While singing folk songs the first line of 'asthayi' as well as of the 'antara' is repeated and other lyrics of the song are interwoven using various combinations of notes. In singing, the feelings are given more importance than the science of music or literature. The tunes are also composed of mixed notes. And the same characteristics are observed in Thumari also.

Many scholars have almost the same opinion about the origin

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of the word 'Thumari'. It is believed to be derived from the words 'Thumak' or 'Thum'. 'Thumak' indicates the dancing gait of walking, and 'Ri' to address a person as 'Ri', 'Ari', 'Eri' etc. In common people's language 'Ri', 'Ari', 'He ri' etc. are used to address people frequently. Therefore the word 'Thumari' has been concluded as meaning a song sung with dancing.

In Northern India a particular class of women used to sing Thumari with dance and acting which used to project romantic mood. This was done by them mainly to entertain the aristocracy and earn their living. In course of time Thumari shed the dancing part and developed as a full fledged singing form and later on several styles of 'Thumari' singing developed and it earned a place of respect as an art form.

Thumari is prominantly considered as a melodious, and romantic form of music. Its place of origin is considered as Uttar Pradesh in Northern India. It was more commonly practiced here by courtesan women who used to present it with appropriate romantic acting. Dr. Shatrughna Shukla in his book "Thumari Ki Utpatti, Vikas aur Shailiyan" has mentioned about the influence of women on Nat, 'Dom', 'Kanjar', 'Ramjani' casts on the development of courteasan culture in Northern Indian which is related more to the rural culture and hence this style is related to folk music.

In Thumari many elements of folk music are clearly discernable. It is said that origin of 'Thumari' lies in 'Charchari gan' of folk music and 'Charchari gan' is in practice since ancient times and is even now practiced as 'Charchari gan' in 'Brij' which is a folk music stream.

In Indian lifestyle, festivals and celebrations have always been important. During vasantotsava (spring festivals) romantic songs and during Holi festival 'charchari gan' were practiced. These songs were composed in folk languages of those times. Similarly Thumari is composed in Brij, Awadhi, Bhojpuri languages. The use of folk languages and folk tunes are prominent in Thumari compositions even today. The expression of Thumari is normally confined to only one octave and this speciality of the tunes is observed in various types of Thumaries.

Folk tunes are spontaneously created. Country folk are not formally trained in music. The notes appealing to individuals are used and a collection of these notes creates the tunes spontaneously. In the tunes we find the 'Raga Swarup'. Thus in folk tunes we come across *'Raga Swarup'* of several Ragas like. 'Gara', 'Zinzoti'. Khamaj, Des, Mewada, Pahadi, Mand, Jangla, Barwa, Sindh, Pilu, Bhairavi which are called 'Dhun-Ragas'. These ragas are considered more appropriate for Thumari than for Khyal. In the Talas also 'Chanchar', 'Keharava', Dadra, Rupak are most commonly used in folk music. Out of these 'chanchar' (Deepchandi), 'Keharava' and Dadra are used commonly in rendering of Thumari. Towards the end during Thumari presentation 'Laggi' is played on the Tabla,

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Laggi is commonly used in folk music also.

Like folk tunes, in Thumari also mixed notes are commonly employed. It is possibly for this reason that names of Thumari raga are commonly prefixed by the words 'Mishra' or 'Manz' e.g. Mishra Khamaj, Mishra Kafi, Mishra Pahadi, Mishra Tilang etc. There have been a number of popular Thumaries composed in the ragas Des and Tilak Kamod e.g. 'Ab ke Savan Ghar Aa Ja, Bidesi Saiya More' is a Thumari presented by some musicians in the Raga Tilak Kamod and by some others in the Raga Des. Thumari singers can take this liberty like the folk singers who have the liberty to sing the same song in different tunes. Thus the aesthetic aspect in Thumari supersede the scientific aspect of music.

The words commonly used in folk songs are frequently employed in Thumari. Thus the words Sainya, Guinya, Ari, Han Ri, Gawanawa, Jamunawa, Jaiyo, Pardesawa, Nadiya, Panwariya, Raja etc. etc. which are commonly used in folk songs are also used frequently in Thumaries.

Lucknow, Banaras and Punjab are well known Gharanas of Thumari. There are three kinds of Thumari style singing viz. Thumari, Hori and Dadra. Thumari style is more popular in Uttar Pradesh of Northern India and many folk songs of U.P. are presented in the form of Thumari today. Kajari, Chaiti, Rasia, Jhula forms of Banaras are famous which although forms of folk music are presented in the Thumri style.

There are several popular folk songs and Thumaries in the ragas Pilu, Gara, Pahadi, Bhairavi, Zinzhoti etc. Rural dialect, simple tunes with mixed notes limited to one octave, romantic and short compositions, use of talas like Chanchar, Dadra, Keharava are all the factors, common to both folk songs and Thumari. Considering all these aspects it can be easily concluded that folk elements are definitely present in Thumari.

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Influence of Thumri and Dadra on Film Music

Pradip Kumar Dixit

Cinema is a powerful, polpular media with an audio-visual impact. In a way, cinema is a modernised, mechanised - drama, and drama includes everything.

> Na tajgyanam, na tatchhilpam na sa vidya na sa Kala,
> na sa yogo na tatkarmam natyesmin yanna drishyate
> (B.No. 1 - 16)

Naturally when 'movies' attained the status of 'talkies' (since the release of first Indian film, 'Alamara' in March 1931, music became an Integrated part of all films. Music had significant and important role. It had threefold use - (i) Casting or Theme Music (ii) Songs in films; and (iii) Effect Music or the backgrount score. Movieslike 'Indra Sabha' (early thirties) had more than sixty songs. On the other hand, films like 'Naujawan' (1973), 'Munna' (1954) 'Kanoon' (1960) 'Bhuvan Shome' (1969) and several other films of seventies and eighties had no songs at all. But all these and all those songless art films had a rich, effective and self explanatory background music.

Now this music in films (songs or just effect music) has three main sources of inspiration : (i) Classical or light classical music of India, (ii) Regional folk music; and (iii) western pop music. Of course, some clever music directors used Tribal Music ro Vrunda Sangeet or music of middle east for some special situation or a particular song; still these mainly threereservoiers are perennial.

In the early thirties, most of the music director of the films had classical background and so naturally their compositions were based on ragas. 'Drut Khyal' type of compositions have sometimes semi-classical (Thumri/Dadara) touch. It was so with Shankar Rao Vyas, Zande Khan, Pannalal Ghose, B.R. Deodhar, Anil Biswas, R. C. Boral, Timir Baran and other stalwarts of classical music as music directors. Those old talkies were vibrating with rich compositions based on various ragas. Some traditional compositions were used with slight variations in tune or additional lyric lines. (As per demand of the situation in the film). I shall quote only three such songs (i) 'Baje damaroo hara kara (Raga: 'Gujakale' Taal : Rupak) was used twice. Once in forties in film 'Manmohan' this particular- song was sung by Bibbo. Again this very song was sung by Nalini Jaywant for the film 'Nirdosh'. Music director was Ashok Ghose. (ii) 'Jhan Jhan Jhan Jhan payal baje' (Raga : 'Nat-bihag' Taal : 'Trital') was used in 1951 for the film 'Bujdil', Sachin Dev Burman was the music director and Lata Mangashkar presented this song (iii) 'e ri jane na dungi' (Raga : 'Kamod' - Taal : 'trital') was used by music director Roshan for the film

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'Chitralekha' (1964). Singer was Lata.

In the same way some very famous traditional Thumaris and Dadaras were used in films with slight changes in the lyric lines. 'Babul mora naihar chooto jaya' is a very famous 'Bhairavi' Thumari. This Thumari has been used several times. Lata K. L. Saigal sang it in the film 'Street Singer' in thirties. Again in 'Mahatma Kabir' (1954) music dirctor Anil Biswas used it. This time the singer was Mnnaday. Again in 1970, music director Jaideva used this same thumri in the film 'Malhar Chhetal Jaye'. This time it was the voice of Lata.

'Kaun gali gayo shyam' is a very famous 'Khamaj' Thumari. Leela Chitnis sang it under the baton of Gyan Dutt for the film 'Madhu' (1959) in a duet poem. Music director was Roshan. A very famous 'Dadara' 'Jara Dhire bolo koi suna lega' sung by Begam Akhtar is also used more than once in films. Pannalal Ghosh (famous flutist) used it in the film 'Basant' (1942). Singers were Parul Ghosh and Arun Kumar. Again the same Dadara is used in the same year in the film 'Nishan' by Amarnath. This same Dadara is used by music director Kamal Das Gupta in 'Rani' (1943).

Late Ustad Abdul Karim Khan sang several Thumris. Some of them are very famous and have been used by various films. Some five decades ago Late K. L. Saigal sang 'piya bin nahin awat chain' for the film 'Devdas'. The same thumri is sang in a duet film by Mahendra Kapoor and AshaBhosale in 'Miya Biwi Rajee' (1960). Late S. D.Burman was the music director. 'Gopala meri karuna kyon nahi aaye' is yet anothr famous thumri by ther late wizard. In the year 1942, music director Annasaheb Mayekar used it for the film 'Sacchha Sapna'. The same is used in the right context in the film 'Draupadi' (1944). Here music was provided by Hanumam Prasad. Yet another famous thumri by Abdul Karim Khan is 'akeli mata jayyo Radhe jamuna ke teer'. This particular piece is used in as many as five films. Hirabai Barodekar sang it for the film 'Latat' in 1947. The same thumri by the same artist was used in the film 'Bahadoor Jeevan' (1948) Music Director was N. Onkarji. In 1954 Lata sang this very number in film 'Suhagan'. This time the music was provided by Vasant Desai and C. Ramachandra. Again in 1956 C. Ramachandran used Lata's golden voice for ther film 'Devata' (a costume drama). The same thumari was rendered. Another famous 'Tilang' Thumari by Abdul Karim Khan is 'Sajan sang kahe ko neha lagaye'. This beautiful and famous thumari is used in a film 'Main Nashey Main Hun'. Music Directors ere Shankar Jaikishan and voice was that fo Lata.

Late Faiyaz Khan used to sing a very famous 'Bhiravi', 'Bajuband khul khul jaya'. This same 'Bhairavi' Thumri is used in film 'Baajuband'. Music was provided by Mohd, Rafi and singer was Lata Mangeshkar. Another famous Dadara set to 'Bhairavi', bata chalat mori chunari rang dari' is cleverly used in the film 'Ladaki'.

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Music directors were R. Sudharshan and Dhaniram. It was rendered By Geeta Dutt. This same piece is used again in the film 'Rani Roopamati'. S. N. Tripathi was the music director and playback was given by Mohd. Rafi and Krishnrao Chonkar. There is a famous bhajan by Meerabai. 'Papiha piyu ki boli na bola' (Raag : Peelu). This bhajan is presented in Thumri style by a number of artists. It was also used in the film 'Meerabai'. Music was given by S. K. Pal and Sitara Devi sang this Bhajan/Thumri.

'Suni ho Nandkumar' is a famous 'Bhairavi' Thumari. In 1945 Khemchand Prakash used it for the film 'Dhanna Bhagat'. It was sung by Khan Mastana. 'Nadiya Kinare mora gaon', another famous 'Piloo' Thumri, was used in the film 'Hum ek Hain' (1946) by music director Husnalal Bhagatram. Singer was popular artist of clasical music, Manik Varma. Music Director C. Ramachandra used anothr popular Thumari 'Lakho ke bola sahe sitamagar tere liye maine' for the film 'Leela' in 1947. It was sung by Vinapani Mukharjee. This same was used by the same music director for the film 'Shagoofa' in 1953 in a duet form. This piece was used by Allarakha Qureshi (famous tabla master) for the film 'Khandan' in 1955. It was rendered by Asha Bhosanle.

Music director Naushad is famous for his love of Indian classical and semi classical music. He has cleverly used many ragas - thumris - dadaras for the songs (gunghat nahin kholungi tore aage' is a famous traditinal Dadara. Naushad uses it for his very famou film 'Mother India' (1957); singer is Lata Mangeshkar. For his Magnum opus 'Mughle-Azam' late K. Asif requested late Bade Gulam Ali Khan to sing under ther baton of Naushad Ali. Apart from one song set to Raga 'Rageshri' Bade Gulam Ali sings one of his very famous Thumri 'Prem jogan bana ke in 'Sohinila'. In 1961 the same music director again used two very famous dadaras. Both were sung by Lata Mangeshkar for the film 'Ganga-Jamuna'. I am refering to 'dhundo dhundo re sajana dhundo' and 'na manu na manu na manu redagabaj tori batiya na manu re'.

'Ja mai tose nahin bolu' is a very famous 'Bhairavi' Thumri sung by various artists. Anil Biswas used it in the voice of Lata Mangeshkar in 1962 for the film 'Sautela Bhai'. Apart from the intial 'Mukhada' other words are different. 'Laga chunari main daga' is yet another famous 'Bhairavi' Thumri. Mannaay sings this under the batt on of Roshan for the film 'Dil hi to hai' in 1963. 'Aaye na balam ka karun sajani' a very famous thumri sung by Bade Ghulam Ali Khan is sung by Yeshudas for the film 'Swami' ; music director was Rajesh Roshan. Shobha Gurtu presents 'Nathaniyan ne hay ram bada dukha diya' a famous traditional piece for the film 'Sajjo Rani' in 1976.

These are only a few examples where the traditional thumris/ dadaras find place in films for the suitable situations. Here the basic tune and initial 'Mukhadas' are the same as in original. Slight change in tunes, supportive - decorative orchestral music, and additional Antaras (words) do not mar the original beauty. I do not intend to - and it is not possible also - to give an exhaus-

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tive list of all the traditional thumries and dadaras used for various films in this small article. The tender feelings, the dancing lilt ('thumri se thumakane ka sambandh dhyana main rakha do') the catchy tunes, the fluid rhythm and the mass appeal make thumri/ dadaras unavoidable for the films where all these qualities of a song matter very much.

Apart from these traditional popular compositons, we find several film songs which are on the pattern of the traditional thumris/dadaras. The context, the words, tune, the picturisation and the presentation reminds us of some thumri or dadara. It has got that typical 'art', typical 'air'. 'Inhin logon ne le liya dupatta mera' is one such thumri - type song used twice. In the year 1943, music director Govind Ram tunes this song for the film 'aabaru', and again music director Gulam Muhammad composed the same song in Thumri fashion for the film 'Pakeeza'. Music director Khemchand Prakash composed a thumri for 'Tansen' (1943) - 'kahe gumana kare ri gori' was sung by late K. L. Saigal. IN the year 1949, in the film 'Gopinath' Ninu Mazumadar gave a song 'Bahoo tero samajayo ri lakhana bara' in the voice of Shamshad Begum. This song has got thumri influence. Lata Mangeshkar sang 'balama bada nadan re' for the film 'Albela' (1951) which reminds us of a thumri. Here the music director was C. Ramachandra. In the year 1952, in the film 'Naubahar'. Music director Roshan presented two thumri - type songs : 'eri main to prema diwani' and dekho ji mera jiya churay liyo jaya'; both renderecd by Lata Mangeshkar.

Films get into different waves and craze. There was a decade of 'Kawwali'. Every third film had a 'Kawwali' situation. There was a decade of Bhajans, Gazals, and other forms. There was a decade of Kotha songs and every third film had one song sung by a prostitute in a typical 'majara' fashion. 'Ye barakha bahara sautana ke dwara na ja more balama na ja' is such a song sung by Lata and Asha for the film 'Mayurpankh' (1954). Music directors were Shankar - Jaikishan. It is needless to add that these 'Mujara' songs were on Thumri-Dadara style. In the year 1955, in the film 'Davdaas' two such songs were there. 'Jise tu kabula kara le' aur 'aba aage teri maraji' both sung by Lata Mangeshkar. Veteran S. D. Burman was the music director. Jhanak Jhanak payal baje' (1955) was a film full of dance and music. Music director Vasant Desai gave a beautiful tune in the voice of Lata : 'saiyan jao jao tose na bolu'. In the year 1956, these thumri style songs were popular. First, 'Murali bairana bhai' film 'Nayi Delhi'; music was provided by Shankar-Jaikishan, singer was Lata Mangeshkar. Second, 'ja ja re ja balama' film 'Basant Bahar' music composed by Shankar-Jaikishan. Singer was Lata Mangeshkar. Third, 'kadar jane na more balama bedardi' film 'Bhai Bhai'; music was that of Madan Mohan and singer was Lata Mangeshkar. Music Director O. P. Nayyar composed 'Chhotasa balama akhiyan nind churaye' for the film 'Ragini' (1958) in the voice of Asha. R. D. Burman gave a beautiful composition : 'ghar aa ja ghira aaya' for the film 'Chh-

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ote Nawab' (1961); singer here is Mangeshkar. Naushad composed a beautiful dadara piece for 'Mughale Azam' in the same year. 'Mohe panghate pe Nandalal chhed gayo re' was sung by Lata Mangeshkar in a typical Dadara fashion for the dance sequence under batton of music director Hemant Kumar. Geeta Dutt sang 'na/jao saiyan chhuda ke bainyan' for the film 'Sahib Bibi Aur Gulam' (1962); in the year 1963, another duet became popular 'Hame dama daika sautan ka ghar jana' Asha Bhosanle and Mubaarak Begam sang under the director Iqbal Quereshi for the film 'Yeh dil kisko doon' (1963). There were two more duets in the year 1964. Suman Kalyanpurkar and Mohammad Rafi sang 'Aajahuna na aaye balama savana bita jaye' for the film 'Sanj aur Sabera'; music was given by Shankar-Jaikishan. Under the same duet Lata and Asha sang 'chhune na dungi hatha re men sajariya se dil bhara dungi' for the film 'Zindagi'. 'Piya tose naina lage re' is a typical thumri type song rendered by Lata for the film 'Guide' (1965), music was provided by S. D. Barman. In the year 1966 'Mamata' came with a story of a prostitute. Roshan presented a song in the voice of Lata. Words were 'ikala more banavam una bina haya'. 'Jab yad kisi kee ati hai' (1967) had a beautiful song by Lata 'Tere bina savan kaise bita tu kya jane balama', music was by Laxmikant Pyarelal. And film 'Dastak' (1970) had two haunting tunes in typical thumri style 'bahiyan na dharo balama' aur 'mai ri kasen kahun me' both by Lata; music was given by Madan Mohan. In 1972 Salil Choudhary composed 'jiya lage na' for the film 'Annadata'. In the same year R. D. Barman composed 'biti na bitaye raina' for the film 'Parichay. The song was in the duet form by Bhupinder and Lata Mangeshkar. In the year 1973 'Namak-haram' and 'Pran Jaye Per Bachan Na Jaye; in 1974 'Sagina and Parinaya', in 1973 'Mausam' and Sanyassi' had songs based on Thumri style.

Then came 'Sholay' with all time box-office record and an age of action film was in full swing. Violence, revenge, smuggling, narcotics and espionage became the themes for the films in late seventies and eighties. Naturally the fast music (Disco, Break,Rock-n-Roll) were the first choice. We cannot have a soft thumri or a stylized dadara in the film like 'Khoon Pasina' or 'Badale-ki-aag' or 'Jalawa'. Even then in films like 'Mukaddar ka Sikandar' where one of the central character is a prostitute, thumri type song 'salame ishka tu meri jan' finds a place. In the films having a role of a prostitute there is a scope for thumri/dadara type songs and music directors do grab such opportunities.

With the best lyricists, best directors, best singers, best accompanists, best technicians, and the best equipments films do have the maximum appeal. They can and they do use all good things cleverly. Film people have used good traditional thumris and dadaras in the past, they use it today and shall also continue to use them in future if and when the right situation arises. Talented music directors have composed and may continue to compose songs

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which will sound like thumris or dadaras.

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Selected papers from those presented at the 3-day seminar on "Thumri - Tradition and Trends" from January 16 to 18, 1987 have been compiled here. As one would readily find from the contents, the seminar covered a wide range of topics, - from antiquity and etymology of Thumri to the influence of Thumri on music in the Indian films; also covering such aspects as folk elements in Thumri, sociology of Thumri and parallel styles in Karanatic musie like Javali and Padam.

Voice and style both are necessary in Thumri presentation, the absence of which will make Thumri a boring sound. Thumri, though considered "light" or "lighter" than the Khyal and Dhrupad-Dhamar, has great capacity for musical expression, exploiting the textual meaning of a very few words or a ph ase or a line of a song and acquiring great depth of emotion. Most or the Thumri-s utilise some two to four line songs expressing deep sorrow or pathos of love and separation; -deepest human emotions on whice epics have been written. Thumri, thus, has acquired much importance in the realm of musical perfomance for classes as well as for masses. Its re-appraisal was the theme of the seminar which yielded some very note-worthy essays. It is hoped that that the readers will welcome this publication.

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